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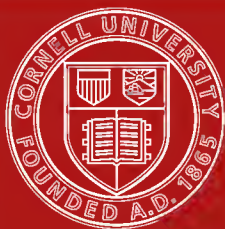
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SHAKESPEARE'S
MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.



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SHAKESPEARE'S
MIDSUMMER
NIGHT'S DREAM.

THE SECOND QUARTO,

1600:

A FAC-SIMILE IN PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHY,

BY

WILLIAM GRIGGS,

FOR 13 YEARS PHOTO-LITHOGRAPHER TO THE INDIA OFFICE.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY

J. W. EBSWORTH, M.A.,

EDITOR OF "THE 'DROLLERIES' OF THE RESTORATION;" "THE BAGFORD
BALLADS;" "THE ROXBURGHE BALLADS," ETC.



LONDON :

W. GRIGGS, HANOVER STREET, PECKHAM, S.E.

1880.



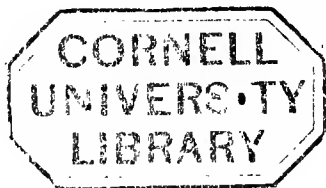
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TO TWO FRIENDS,
J. O. HALLIWELL-PHILLIPPS, F.S.A., ETC.,
WHO, MORE THAN ALL OTHER WRITERS,
HAS ILLUSTRATED THE
LITERATURE OF
"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM,"
AND TO
SIR NOËL PATON, R.S.A., ETC.,
WHO, ABOVE ALL OTHER ARTISTS, HAS SHOWN THE FAIRY-LAND
LOVELINESS OF OBERON AND TITANIA, IN THEIR
HAUNTED WOOD NEAR ATHENS,
THIS REPRODUCTION OF THE SECOND QUARTO
IS, WITH SINCERE ESTEEM
AND AFFECTION,
Dedicated,

BY

J. W. EBSWORTH.



[Shakspeare-Quarto Fac-similes, No. 4.]

INTRODUCTION

TO THE PHOTO-LITHOGRAPH OF

JAMES ROBERTS'S QUARTO EDITION, 1600:

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

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| <p>§ 1. <i>James Roberts's Quarto unregistered.</i></p> <p>§ 2. <i>The two Quartos not simultaneous, or both independent.</i></p> <p>§ 3. <i>Four Statements; to be substantiated.</i></p> <p>§ 4. <i>The First Folio based on Roberts's Quarto.</i></p> <p>§ 5. <i>Roberts's text borrowed from Fisher's Quarto.</i></p> | <p>§ 6. <i>Fisher's text must have had genuine manuscript authority.</i></p> <p>§ 7. <i>The formation of the Folio text.</i></p> <p>§ 8. <i>Some peculiarities of the Folios.</i></p> <p>§ 9. <i>Roberts's text not "corrected from Fisher's."</i></p> <p>§ 10. <i>Conclusion: the value of the Quarto editions.</i></p> |
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§ I. JAMES ROBERTS'S QUARTO UNREGISTERED.



THE three most important versions of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* text are now placed within reach of the student of literature, by means of photo-lithography; which gives, with absolute exactitude, a reproduction of every peculiarity in the typography of the originals. It would not be too much to say that equal facilities for independent and combined examination of these materials were never hitherto attainable, at moderate cost, since the early part of the seventeenth century. Even in 1623, when for twenty shillings a purchaser could claim the newly-issued First Folio of "*Mr. William Shakespear's Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies: Published according to the True Originall Copies* : London : Printed by Isaac Iaggard and Ed. Blount," the sixpenny editions, each in Quarto, that had been circulated for nearly a quarter of a century, must have

become scarce, and therefore more costly. All these originals had in our day ceased to be accessible, except in some few national or ducal libraries, and could not be bought without a ruinous expenditure of money, before Howard Staunton's excellent photo-lithograph appeared in 1866: more trustworthy, being scientifically reproduced, than the careful typographical reprint of the same First Folio, issued two years earlier, but reduced into a quarto size of page, by Lionel Booth, of 307, Regent Street, 1864. This had been printed by L. Strangeways and H. E. Walden, 28, Castle Street, Leicester Square.¹ The original First Folio, in perfect condition, occasionally sells at between seven hundred and eight hundred guineas (the Baroness Burdett-Coutts paid such a sum for hers); and the Quartos are so rare that they virtually never come into the market at all.

By the help of this present series of *exact reproductions*, students of moderate means, on both sides of the Atlantic, are once more enabled to search for themselves the true text, and to collate the chief authorities, unmisled by the caprices of commentators, or by the deliberate falsifications introduced at various times. There are many persons now desirous of investigating the subject, and capable of valuing the uncorrupted language of the Poet.

As we have done with Fisher's Quarto, so here with that of Roberts: For purposes of reference, it is sufficient that *we number the lines of the Quarto*, in fours, on the inside margin; and also *mark the division of Acts*, which is given in the Folio but not in either Quarto. We add a list of characters, on a separate page, facing the title, for convenience and completeness; but no list was given in any edition before Rowe's, in 1709.²

¹ Still later appeared a marvellously cheap reproduction by photo-lithography, reducing each large folio page into an 8vo., necessarily minute in character. It was published in 1876, by Messrs. Chatto and Windus, with an Introduction written by J. O. Halliwell Phillipps. There had been a serviceable imitation of the First Folio, issued of full size (known as "Upcott's Reprint"), about 1807. We need only mention the costly and rare *Ashbee Fac-similes*, which were lithographed from elaborate tracings. They were attainable by few; at five guineas each, and only thirty copies issued. George Stevens had, however, in 1766 issued, in four octavo volumes, *Twenty of the Plays of Shakespeare in Quarto*.

² It shows the need of such a reproduction as our own, when we find a scholar (one so generally accurate as the learned Daniel Wilson, Professor of History and English Literature at Toronto) mistakenly declare: "It is, perhaps, due to the

In his Introduction prefixed to the photo-lithograph of Fisher's Quarto, the present writer has attempted to show the probable date of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* to have been not earlier than 1593, or later than 1596. It cannot possibly have been produced later than August, 1598 (judging from the mention of it by Meres); although the entry of Fisher's Quarto in the Registers is not until the 8th of October, 1600.

Of the Quarto now reproduced there is no entry whatever in the same Registers, to more precisely indicate the date than any mere statement of the year, 1600, on Roberts's title-page. We are left entirely to our own resources in the endeavour to ascertain which of the two Quartos was the earlier issued. After careful examination, and judging by internal evidence in the absence of external proof, we venture to affirm our belief that Thomas Fisher's was the earlier produced.¹

early place which '*A Midsummer Night's Dream*' undoubtedly occupies among the dramatic works of Shakespeare, that in all the older texts it is divided into acts and not into scenes"—(*Caliban: A Critique on Shakespeare's Tempest and A Midsummer Night's Dream*. 1873. P. 240.). This he writes after giving a special description of the two Quartos; but the simple fact is, that neither of them shows any division whatever into acts or scenes. The Folio of 1623 first introduced the distinction of the acts in this play, but made no further division into scenes. After all, when we remember how little was done on the early Stage to change the background, except by affixing and removing an explanatory placard, we need not wonder at the deficiency of exact limits to scenes or acts. Like Robert Stephens's innovation of verse-division, in 1551, continued in our English Bibles, the system may be found convenient for easy reference; but it is frequently destructive of some higher charm. It breaks the continuity of subject, and our attention is frittered away on fragmentary passages. A modern audience loses remembrance of the poetry and romance of the drama during each frivolous recurrence to gossip and flirtation, to fill the time between the acts. It would be well if the intervals were less obtrusively marked, both in acting and printing. Here, at least, in our Quartos, the divisions can be found when sought, but are not thrust forcibly on attention.

¹ In this we avowedly run counter to the opinion expressed by so honoured an authority as J. O. Halliwell-Phillipps, who writes as follows: "Perhaps Fisher's edition, which, on the whole, seems to be more correct than the other, was printed from a corrected copy of that published by Roberts. It has, indeed, been usually supposed that Fisher's edition was the earliest; but no evidence has been adduced in support of this assertion, and the probabilities are against this view being the correct one. Fisher's edition could not have been published till nearly the end of the year, and, in the absence of direct information to the contrary, it may be supposed that the one printed by Roberts is really the first edition." (*Memoranda on The Midsummer Night's Dream*, privately printed, 1879, p. 34: written 1855.) One ought to feel quietly confident of the strength of argument, and evidence, who holds and tries to establish any opinion adverse to that proclaimed by so experienced

§ 2. THE TWO QUARTOS NOT SIMULTANEOUS, OR BOTH
INDEPENDENT.

The two Quartos were certainly not issued simultaneously, although near to one another in date, both being of the same year, 1600. They were not both independent, in the sense of being wholly disconnected with each other: the later one being a direct or modified copy of its predecessor. An impression of the earlier Quarto lay before the compositor who set-up the second. Shakespeare himself makes one of his characters, Dogberry, admit that "When two men ride upon a horse, one must needs ride behind." Now it was most unlikely, *à priori*, that the open and unrebuked publisher of the Registered Quarto, Thomas Fisher, should have ridden behind the unlicensed, and probably piratical James Roberts.¹ Be it remembered that after the 8th of October there still remained, according to the "old style" of computation, more than five months for Roberts to publish his book, and yet be entitled to date it as of the year 1600. So any conjectures, based on Fisher's Quarto being unpublished "till nearly the end of the year" affect not the question whether the two Quartos were issued simultaneously. If any person believes that they

a guide. But we have formed our estimate deliberately, and are prepared to abide by the conclusions thus gained. We try to show that "the probabilities" are not against the theory of Fisher holding priority; and also bring forward the evidence attainable "in support of this assertion." As a mere supposition, one is as likely as the other. It really becomes a question of evidence, to be gathered and interpreted from a collation of the Quartos themselves, and in connection with the First Folio edition of 1623.

¹ The name of James Roberts, as the printer, is on the title-page of other unregistered Shakespeare Quartos, viz., two editions of *The Excellent History of the Merchant of Venice, with the extreme Cruelty of Shylocke the Jew*, etc., printed by J. Roberts, 1600 (L. Heyes, publisher); the earliest Quarto extant of *Titus Andronicus* (E. White, publisher), the same year, 1600; lastly, the second Quarto of *Hamlet*, 1604 (N. Ling, publisher), with another edition of the same in the following year, 1605.

We add these few particulars concerning the printers, gathered from the Registers of the Company of Stationers:—

T[homas] Fisher. Date of Freedom, 3 June, 1600 (vol. ii. 725). Date of First Registered publication (the Quarto of *Midsummer Night's Dream*), 8 Oct. 1600 (iii. 174).

James Robertes (*sic*). Date of Freedom, 27 June, 1564 (i. 240). Date of First Registered publication (Christopher Payne's *Cristenmas Carolles*, and *The Country Clown Doth much Desyre a gent to be*), 15 $\frac{1}{2}$ (i. 402).

were, he must remember that the burden of proof is left to him : for, to the best of our knowledge, there exists no evidence whatever in support of such a view. Still less (if less than none could be) is there any support given to an idea that both of the two Quartos may have been framed from separate manuscript originals. While the innumerable differences between them show that one Quarto is not a servile reproduction of the other, it is likewise true that the characteristics of both, showing a general and frequently also a specific similarity in printing, must shut out any supposition of the later copy having been wholly uninfluenced by its predecessor. Both Quartos are now before the reader for comparison. We need do little beyond indicate certain chains of evidence : to establish or refute certain theories in connection with the Folio text.

§ 3. FOUR STATEMENTS ; TO BE SUBSTANTIATED.

We advance the following four statements, as representing indisputable facts, after a study of the two Quartos, side by side, and in connection with the other chief textual authority, the first Folio of 1623.

1st. That despite a general resemblance between Fisher's and Roberts's editions in Quarto, 1600, there are dissimilarities dividing them, which prove with absolute certainty that the second-printed Quarto (by whomsoever issued) must have been set-up afresh. A typographical reprint of both would have shown this contrast less clearly than does the photo-lithographic couple of Quartos now offered for collation. Out of a multitude of examples, the different arrangement of the Italicized Stage-directions offers itself to view. In Fisher's, the business is given (as usual) in *Italic* type, with exception of the proper names of the characters ; which are in Roman type. But in Roberts's, *the whole line is in Italic type*, names and all. The minute differences of spelling, some of them capricious and occasional, not constant, are innumerable and suggestive.

2nd. That when "setting-up" the later Quarto, the printer has had the sheets of the earlier Quarto beside him : because the making-up of the two versions, page by page, is closer in resemblance than

could have happened accidentally. In general, the pages of both editions begin with the same line. The exceptions are chiefly in the prose (or else in the pages following nearest to prose passages), and this difference was caused by Roberts's page being wider than Fisher's to the extent of about two letters' breadth. And it is remarkable that when this difference ensued, from the cause here shown, a recurrence has been speedily made to the former agreement; by leaving a wider space at the earliest opportunity where stage-business was mentioned. Thus, after interruption, the restoration of similarity meets us, and the two versions begin their pages again with the same line. Evidently this was designedly, and not by chance. Let it not be thought that even in verse-printing identity of line-lengths was inevitable, for errors of arrangement in one Quarto are repeated in the other Quarto. For instance: observe the blunder of printing "Stand forth *Demetrius*," and "Stand forth *Lysander*," as stage-directions (in p. 3), while the construction of the verse proves clearly that each broken line is a part of the speech spoken by Egeus, and addressed respectively to the rival lovers. Yet both Quartos give the erroneous indication, as though we were to read it as "*Business* : here *Demetrius* is to stand forward," and the same of *Lysander*. The Folio copies the mistake without detection. Which brings us to

3rd. That the First Folio edition, 1623, was demonstrably set-up from Roberts's Quarto; although that Quarto was an unauthorized, and presumably a spurious or pirated edition; recourse not being had to Fisher's superior Quarto of the same year (registered and more carefully punctuated, although less modernly spelt, and with fewer prompter's stage-directions). In confirmation of which statement we observe,

4th. That where there are differences between these Quartos, the First Folio closely follows that of Roberts's, and not Fisher's :

a. In spelling, *passim*.

β. In punctuation, *passim*.

γ. In position, or in transposition, of words.¹

¹ *Exem. gratia* (p. 48-176), "Now I doe wish it," of Fisher, reads: "Now do I wish it," in Roberts's; and also in the First Folio.

δ. *Italicized stage-directions* (much more frequent in Roberts's than in Fisher's) *are followed, and enlarged, in the Folio.*¹

ε. In plain and palpable emendations.²

§ 4. THE FIRST FOLIO TEXT BASED ON THAT OF ROBERTS'S QUARTO.

Often, where the Folio corrects a phrase (that had been evidently wrongly given before, by Roberts), it had been wrongly given by Fisher also. Therefore, we see that the correction of Roberts's error was not borrowed from Fisher's copy.

Examples: 1. (P. 26.) Both Quartos blunder in giving the speech, on Bottom's exit, "A stranger *Pyramus* than e'er play'd here" to Quince. The improbability of his making such a comment is obvious. It came appropriately from the mocking voice of Puck: and accordingly the First Folio prints it with "*Puck*" for the speaker.

2. (P. 49.) Fisher and Roberts agree in misprinting, "But man is but patcht a foole;" which in the Folio is rightly given, "But man is but a patcht fool," etc.

3. (P. 50.) A far stronger case, where both Quartos read, "*Enter Quince, Flute, Thisby, and the rabble.*" This is altered in the Folio into "*Enter Quince, Flute, Thisbie, Snout, and Starveling;*" with a substitution of "*Staru.*" for "*Flute*" as speaking second. Now this has evidently been guess-work, without authority of the Poet's manuscript, and helps to perpetuate a "muddle." For the printers fail to remember that Flute is himself the representer of Thisbie. Perhaps the first error of the Quartos was the omission to mark (not "*Thisbie*," but) "*Thisbie's Mother*":—a character that had been allotted to the timid Robin Starveling, although she does not speak when the interlude is afterwards acted. Her part is dumb-show, and therefore

¹ *Ex. grat.* (p. 49, line 187). Where Fisher has a long single line, Roberts divides it properly, and reads, as a new line, "Come *Hippolita*," with "*Exit*" inserted in continuation of this fresh line: this being supplemented in the First Folio, which reads: "*Exit Duke and Lords*," not "*Exeunt Duke, Hippolita, and Lords*," as it ought to be. Again, the important "*Exit*" of Bottom (on p. 50, to end the modern Scene I of Act iv.) is not in Fisher's.

² *Ex. grat.* (p. 49.) Fisher's has "if he goe about expound this dream." Roberts and First Folio have "if he go about *to* expound this dream."

especially suited to the nervous tailor, who fears his own voice and shadow. It is Flute who habitually mistakes his words (witness his repetition of "*Ninny's tomb*," despite the correction earlier administered to him by Quince). Therefore, we may be sure that the awkward misreading of "*Paramour*" for "*Paragon*," comes from Flute; and not from the sensible manager, Peter Quince, to whom it is wrongly assigned. Can we restore the right name? It may have been either Quince or Snout; or even "*Thisbie's Mother*," otherwise *Starveling*. Certainly not "*Thisby*"=*Flute*. Yet the Folio accepts this false reading unhesitatingly, while making some other changes, one of which is merely a specification of business detail. In fine, the characters are so clearly marked elsewhere that the true reading must be something like this:—

Quince.—Have you sent to *Bottom's* house? Is he come home yet?

Flute [as in Quartos].—He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

Thisbie [*'s mother*=*Starveling*].—If he come not, then the play is marr'd. It goes not forward, does it?

Quince.—It is not possible: you have not a man in all *Athens* able to discharge *Pyramus* but he.

Thisbie [*'s mother*=*Starveling*].—No, he hath simply the best wit of any handy-craft man in *Athens*.

Flute [not *Quince*, as wrongly marked in Quartos and Folio].—Yes, and the best person too, and he is a very *Paramour*, for a sweet voice.

Quince [or else *Thisbie's mother*=*Starveling*, but certainly not *Thisbie*, as marked by all].—You must say, *Paragon*. A *Paramour* is (God bless us!) a thing of naught.

§ 5. ROBERTS'S TEXT BORROWED FROM FISHER'S QUARTO.

Now as to the sequence of publication, we hold it to be in this chronological order:—

Earliest.—Fisher's Quarto; 8th October, 1600.

Next.—Roberts's Quarto; after 8th October, 1600, and before March 25th, 1601.

Last.—The First Folio, 1623; copying Roberts's text, with conjectural alterations in the few places where differences occur.

We hold it to be almost impossible—certainly to us it appears incredible—that any printer like Thomas Fisher (with Roberts's printed text before his eyes) could have deliberately changed the spelling, in multitudinous instances, *back* into a more cramped and lumbering

archaic fashion. We give a brief sample of these differences in corresponding places; but they are innumerable throughout:—

Fisher's Quarto.

tel—*Snugge*—els—homeSpunnes—per-
happes—hewe—eeke—Iewe—*Snowte*
doe—hogge—Fynch—Sparrowe—
answere—ly—hee, etc. (all taken
within the compass of a few pages:
and in the prose).

Roberts's Quarto.

tell—*Snug*—else—home-Spuns—per-
haps—hue—eke—Iew—*Snowt*—do
—hog—Finch—Sparrow—answer—
lye—he, etc. (all within pages 25—
28: and in the prose).

Also many contractions—such as trēble, for tremble; lātern, for lantern; chābre, for chamber; vnderstād, for vnderstand; trāslated, for translated—all made unnecessarily, because they are in the same prose portion of Fisher's Folio.

On the other hand, it is by no means difficult to understand the improved clearness in typography of Roberts over that of Fisher (supposing, as we do, that Roberts had Fisher's printed book before his eyes). For there was the additional space gained—

1. By the excision of redundant letters;
2. By having a wider platform of type in his page;
3. By his gaining an occasional line in prose passages, and thus being able to afford extra leads at entrance of characters.

Despite this improvement in typographical clearness, there is a marked deterioration in the minute divisions of the verse by punctuation. Commas are less frequent, either from negligence or from systematic repugnance to the scholarly and grammatical breaking-up of sentences. Either supposition would account for the change. It cannot be that Fisher had intentionally improved upon Roberts in these minute subdivisions; for, if so, he would never have blundered in more important details of punctuation, such as we see differently given in the two Quartos. Everything indicates the priority of Fisher.

The difference of date being at most only a few months, the frequent change of spelling made by Roberts from that employed by Fisher must have been attributable to personal taste—a modernizing tendency of fashion, that inclined Roberts to simplify his spelling, and dispense with so many useless letters. He thus economizes his “lower case.”

Another indication of the order of succession, now formulated. Let us take the noble passage, wherein Theseus discourses of Imagination (Quartos, p. 51). It is surely difficult, if not impossible, to believe that any printer or tolerably instructed "reader of the press" could have had Roberts's text lying before him, and yet made such hurtful misarrangement of the verse as we now find in line 6 of Fisher's text, bringing injuriously into the same line "The Lunatick." Both editions, here as elsewhere, spoil the rhythm of the poetry by wrong division of lines. But, in almost every case, the differences between the Quartos mark an alteration having been made *from Fisher's into Roberts's*, never from Roberts's into Fisher's.

(P. 25.) Fisher has: "We ought to looke toote." Roberts gives this clearly: "We ought to looke to it." If Roberts had come first, and been copied by Fisher, such a change as "toote" would not have been seen.

What is shown above, by the injury to rhythm, is elsewhere shown by the redundancy of capitals (as in line 88 of p. 27, Fisher's Quarto, which *could* not have been set wrongly from the correct arrangement in Roberts's). We fear these examples may appear to be tediously insisted on; but if they prove our statement—that *Fisher preceded Roberts*—an important step is gained in understanding the formation of the Folio's text, *which assuredly was built on that of Roberts's*.

§ 6. FISHER'S TEXT MUST HAVE HAD GENUINE MANUSCRIPT AUTHORITY.

The only text of the three that can be shown to have been formed on genuine manuscript authority is that which we possess in the *fac-simile* of Fisher's Quarto. There is absolutely no proof whatever in favour of an independent origin for the Folio text, Heminge and Condell having availed themselves of the printed sheets issued by Roberts; and these sheets were taken almost without further correction when re-set, "at the charges of W. Jaggard, Ed. Blount, I. Smithweeke, and W. Aspley, 1623." There is, moreover, no proof whatever (but presumptive evidence to the contrary) that any inde-

pendent manuscript authority had been previously employed by James Roberts.

Those persons who have carefully studied the pirated and corrupt versions of some other Shakespearian plays can scarcely fail to notice the difference when they come to examine Fisher's Quarto. It is, comparatively speaking, correctly printed. Whether the "copy" or the compositor were answerable for the spelling, we know not; but as printers have always been strictly conservative in such debatable matters (resisting changes advocated by individuals or inconstant fashion),¹ we are inclined to lay the blame chiefly on Fisher. Certainly, he was less skilled and less given to innovation than Roberts, who used his earlier sheets. Fisher is somewhat heedless in regard to exits and entrances (Roberts adding several such announcements, where they were self-evidently necessary). But, on the whole, the text is given with so close an approximation to correctness, that the reader awakens to a regretful remembrance of the vast inferiority in the earliest printed texts of other Shakespearian dramas.

In short, there is a reasonable ground for supposing that Fisher's Quarto may have been an accredited publication, favoured by Shakespeare, although not corrected for the press by himself.

§ 7. THE FORMATION OF THE FOLIO TEXT.

We know not what reason guided Heminge and Condell to employ Roberts's text for the First Folio, instead of Fisher's. But we are not likely to err in supposing the choice to have been dictated by two out of three circumstances.

1st. They did not possess an independent holograph manuscript from Shakespeare's hand of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Therefore they availed themselves of a printed version (either marked as "prompt-

¹ We are all of us under obligation to intelligent compositors and press-readers, for their steady conservatism and shrewd sense, as well as for other bounties. Long may they continue to preserve their neighbours' land-marks! They are needed now, more than ever, to guard our English literature from being desecrated by the vagaries of self-styled philologists; who would speedily bring us to a chaotic wilderness of barbarism, through some "spelling-reform." We must resist these revolutionists, who threaten us that lists are to be published of proscribed forms of spelling, like the Hue-and-Cry photographic records of escaped criminals.

book," for representation, or, more probably, an ordinary purchased copy).

2nd. They preferred Roberts's Quarto, because it was the better printed of the two Quartos, and more suited for their reproduction. Or else,

3rd. Because Fisher's Quarto (although registered) was by this time out of their reach, and, perhaps, virtually forgotten. But Roberts's, we know, was at their hand, and was found serviceable.

All of us owe so large a debt of gratitude to these two actors, "John Hemmings and Henry Condell" (as their names are given in the list of "The Principall Actors in all these plays" of Shakespeare, at beginning of the First Folio), that we will not be ungracious enough to swell the chorus of abuse raised by ignorance and ingratitude, because they did not take additional pains to secure us an accurate impression of the *ipsissima verba* of that greatest poet, whom they loved and honoured. In their dedication of the plays to the Earl of Pembroke, they claim only to have "collected them." To the public, "the great variety of readers," they judiciously offer their advice, "to buy it first," and then "to read, and censure," if men will, according to privilege of purchasers. They express regret that the author himself had not "liu'd to haue set forth and ouerseen his owne writings." They glance at the "diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies, maim'd and deform'd by the frauds and stealthes of injurious impostors, that expos'd them;" and they claim, somewhat beyond the actual warrant of truth, to now offer them to view "cur'd and perfect of their limbes: and all these rest" [*id est*, these never hitherto printed in any edition], "absolute in their numbers, as he conceiu'd thē." We must not press too hardly against these worthy actors, who thus assumed the editorial cares of authorship, for which they had not been trained by previous practice. What they urged may have been in great part true, although not true of all, or nearly all, the plays. Probably of "The Tempest," with which delightedly they open their treasure-trove, the statement is substantially correct; and they tried to give the never-printed masterpiece as "we haue scarce receiued from him a blot in his papers."

Of sixteen plays we see the earliest known transcript in the Folio of 1623. Where it is faulty, therefore, we are often left helplessly perplexed. But, in many other cases, we find valuable help afforded by the earlier-printed Quartos; to some of which the Folio was indebted for its text, and notably so in the case of that loveliest work of youthful fancy, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

§ 8. SOME PECULIARITIES OF THE FOLIOS.

Having already given (in the Introduction to Fisher's Quarto, p. iii.) the entry belonging to it from the Registers of the Stationers' Company, C. fol. 65 *verso*, we now add the important entry concerning the First Folio. It is of date, possibly, before the volume was fully completed (the book requires, from its bulk, to be a long time in progress), and although the list appears to have been carefully transcribed, and in correct order, only those plays are mentioned of which no Quarto editions are extant: "soe many of the said Copies as are not formerly entred to other men." It thus becomes a valuable record of the admission made at the time, that there were sundry other plays floating about—more or less authorized, and as legalized property—among which would be reckoned *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

8^o Nouembris 1623.

Master Blounte Entred for their Copies vnder the hands of Master Isaak Jaggard. Doctor Worrall and Master Cole Warden Master WILLIAM SHAKSPEERS *Comedyes, Histories, and Tragedyes*, soe manie of the said Copies as are not formerly entred to other men. . . . *viz.* vijs

COMEDYES. *The Tempest*
The two gentlemen of Verona
Measure for Measure
The Comedy of Errors
As you like it
All's well that ends well
Twelfth night
The winters tale

HISTORIES. *The thirde parte of HENRY ye SIXT*
HENRY the EIGHT

TRAGEDIES. *CORIOLANUS*
TIMON of Athens
JULIUS CÆSAR
MACKBETH
ANTHONIE and CLEOPATRA
CYMBELINE

It will be found useful to have this list here for future reference, as well as for present service. We have some important deductions to draw from it hereafter, and on a future occasion, when we have free scope, we may bring fresh evidence to establish our conclusions, regarding the materials employed in the First Folio. It is unnecessary to detail the few changes successively made in the Second, Third, and Fourth Folios, of 1632, 1664 (valuable only for its rarity, most copies of this edition having perished in the Great Fire of 1666), and 1684. Corruptions of the text continually increased, there being no resumed attention paid to early Quartos.

It has been weakly taken for granted that the Folio rectifies the errors of the Quartos. Examination proves the falsity of this supposition. It will be convenient to give our proofs in a foot-note.¹

¹ The Folio spoils Lysander's speech (p. 6, line 133), mutilating the verse by omitting "Eigh me!"—the full line being, "Eigh me! for anght that I could ever read," &c.

Both Quartos had rightly printed an old-fashioned word (in p. 6, line 144), in "Making it *Momentary* as a sound." The Folio, showing ignorance of the phraseology, has conjecturally changed this into "*Momentarie*."

Almost the only innovation of the Folio possessing any value is in Act iii. sc. 2, where the metre is restored by making Hermia say, "I am amazed at your *passionate* words." But even here, where this probable conjecture is employed, we might rest content with the Quarto's "I am amazed at your words" (unless we accept "passionate" as = *pass'nate*, dissyllabic), in a choice of imperfections. Shakespeare often left an incomplete verse.

One might hail as an approach towards correction the Folio's reading, "Now is the *morall* downe betweene the two Neighbors" (which is itself a mistake for *mural*: if we are to accept the adjective, instead of the substantive, to make sense); instead of the puzzling, "Now is the Moon Vsed betweene the two neighbors" (p. 57, line 204).

But the Folio leaves uncorrected the palpable blunder, "wondrous *strange* snow" (p. 53, line 57), which probably ought to be "wondrous *seethings*," or "scaldinge snow," or some other contrasting word, as in the case of "hot ice."

Let a fresh plea be here advanced for the admission of this conjectural "*seeth-*

After such a list as we have given, which might have been swelled if necessary, it is idle to talk of the Folio editors having access to any manuscript authority for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. We hold it indisputable that *they used Roberts's printed Quarto*, sometimes increasing the defects, sometimes guessing commonplace variations; but they give absolutely nothing of such improvements as would have been gained from a genuine manuscript, or even from a certified "revised and corrected" prompt-book.

ing" in place of the absurd misprint "strange," or the advocated "swarthy," which is inadmissible. "Seething" is in the doubtful Perkins' Folio of 1632; but as a guess it is not disqualified. We note that in Thomas Bastard's *Chrestoleros: Seven bookes of Epigrammes written by T. B.*, 1598 (the very year of the latest possible date of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), on p. 139, we meet a confirmation of *seething* being used as synonymous with *baking*:—

BOOK VI. EPIGRAM 13.

"There is no fish in brookes little or great,
And why? for all is fish that comes to nett.
The small eate sweete, the great more daintely.
The great will *seeth* or bake, the small will frye." etc.
(British Museum, Case 39, a. 3, second art.)

Also, the Folio continues the erroneous "*she meanes*," which is a misprint for "*she moans*," in mockery of Thisbe (p. 60, line 300). Also, the Folio accepts and retains the misprint (p. 61, line 338) of "And the Wolfe *beholds* the Moone;" instead of the indisputable "*behovls* the Moone."

Again, in Oberon's disenchantment spell (p. 45, line 70), the metre is spoilt by the Folio interpolating a word, "Be *thou* as thou art wont to be." And, in Oberon's last speech, or song (p. 62, lines 384, 385), both Quartos having made the blunder of a misplaced line, the Folio blindly follows the example, perplexing later commentators, and tempting them to conjectural emendation. But the error was simply one that Roberts had already fallen into (on p. 28, with lines 125 and 127), viz., the transposition of two lines. We must read:

"And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest."

Not, as the Quartos and Folio wrongly give it:

"Ever shall in safety rest,
And the owner of it blest."

The Folio errs in omitting Oberon's name, attached to this song in the Quartos. It gives the song in *Italics*, not recognizing Oberon as leading the fairies, which he expressly declares:

"And this Ditty after me, Sing and dance it trippingly."

We have no call to believe, with Dr. Samuel Johnson (who, at the time, knew nothing of Fisher's Quarto), that the song mentioned by Titania is lost.

As to the transposed line in Titania's address to Bottom, we shall see (on next page) that the Folio endorses Roberts's corruption of the Fisher text.

§ 9. ROBERTS'S TEXT NOT "CORRECTED FROM FISHER'S."

No one hereafter need feel any timidity in speaking of the Fisher Quarto as "the First Quarto," and of Roberts's Quarto as "the Second Quarto," if our demonstration be held complete.

In Titania's first address to Bottom a palpable error occurs in Roberts's Quarto; the final line having, wrongly, become the second by a printer's error: that is, the line had been dropt while the type was being set: it was noticed, and then inserted, but at a wrong place, the blunder remaining undetected, although the comma remaining at the end of the line "doth moue me," shows plainly the nature of the accident.¹ Now this glaring typographical error is positively copied into the Folio, although it spoils the verses! The compositor had sufficient wit, and no more, to alter the final comma of Roberts's into a full stop. Surely nothing could better prove (1st) the absence of authoritative correction in the Folio, and (2nd) the priority of Fisher's to Roberts's corrupted text.

Far from Roberts's being, as it is loosely declared, "corrected from Fisher's," the verse is often marred by Roberts departing from Fisher's reading. Here are instances of such damage, *and all of them are endorsed by the Folio in repetition*:—

	FISHER'S TEXT.	ROBERTS'S, AND FOLIO.
P. 7, line 174.	prosper <i>loues</i> . [Rhyming with "dounes"] changed into	<i>loue</i> .
„ 15 „ 102.	And <i>thorough</i> this distemperature, changed into	<i>through</i> this
„ — „ 103.	<i>hoary</i> headed frosts, changed into	<i>hoared</i> headed frosts
„ 17 „ 173.	<i>round about</i> the earth, changed into	<i>round the</i> earth.
„ 35 „ 173.	<i>Helen</i> , it is not so, changed into	It is not so.

¹ This piece of evidence is so important, and has been hitherto so overlooked, that it will be better to give the passage in full:—

FISHER'S QUARTO.	ROBERTS'S QUARTO, AND FOLIO.
<i>Titania</i> .—I pray thee, gentle mortall, sing againe—	<i>Tytania</i> .—I pray thee gentle mortall, sing againe,
Myne eare is much enamoured of thy note :	Mine eare is much enamored of thy note ;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape, And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth mooue mee,	On the first view to say, to sweare I love thee. So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape, And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth moue me,
On the first viewe to say, to sweare, I loue thee.	

The Folio repeats Roberts's text, *verbatim, et literatim, et punctuatim*, except at the end, which has a period, "*doth moue me.*"

Pressure of other promised work caused delay. Our special business in this Quarto has been to indicate, to the best of our ability, its true place and value in relation to Fisher's Quarto of the same year, 1600, and to the earliest Folio, 1623. So, in our Introduction to Fisher's Quarto, we limited ourselves to considering the evidence in adjustment of the date as a composition, and only briefly touched on what may well be called the higher criticism.¹

To another opportunity, perhaps to a more skilful hand, is left the unwinding of many a clue. The intricacies of the fairy mythology might well demand attention and most profound scholarship. Hitherto little has been done, beyond the gathering of materials, to form a judgment. Painters, like our early teacher, David Scott, and our still living friend, revered and loved, Sir Noël Paton, have delighted to embody on their canvas the airy gambols of "the Puck," the graceful dignity of Oberon, the loveliness of Titania, the quaint variety of blended whimsicality and bewitching beauty among the elves and sylphs that held their revels in the haunted woodland. Poets and musicians have not lingered far behind: they strove, like Mendelssohn, to make melody reveal the mysteries that underlie the twilight gloaming—the messages that are heard or seen by those alone whose faculties are spiritualized and quickened, after having breathed diviner air. From sculpture and from architecture have been bor-

¹ After all, it is not the individual opinion of any Editor, but *the exact reproduction of the text itself*, in photo-lithographic *fac-simile*, that must indisputably form the chief value of this projected series of Quartos. If their text be presented trustworthily, they will be prized and circulated. (For any delay of issue, hitherto, neither the publisher nor the present writer is in any degree responsible. Both are blameless. Our two Quartos of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*—a labour of love, not a hireling task—are advanced before their announced position, owing to the three other plays which should have preceded them being still behind time. They were from different hands.) We have not deemed it necessary to give a longer or more exhaustive Introduction to each of our own two Quartos. Together they form a total of only thirty-seven pages.

Moreover, circumstances have shown to us the expediency of retaining, for the present, within our own possession, certain valuable materials, literary and pictorial, gathered for the illustration of the Fairy Mythology of Shakespeare and his Contemporaries. They are kept back until such time as they can be published free from any injurious control. We write for those who possess sympathy with something beyond the dry bones of etymological and linguistic study of him who was "the world's Shakespeare." Readers will meet us again in this haunted wood of Oberon and Titania. Let us hope that it may not be without mutual pleasure or mutual profit. *Vale.*

rowed the severe and stately calm that meets us in such noble figures as Duke Theseus with his Amazonian bride; the slumbering lovers, couched apart, half-hid in shadow, half-glorified by the moon's beams; and even the procession of the wedding-guests, coming at the close like a happy inspiration—a dreamland fancy, caught up in memory from some description of the Panathenaic frieze, as told by travellers who had roved through Greece, and found true pleasure in conversing with our Stratford Poet, whose listening ear was ready to accept the tale. Elsewhere we see him in his superhuman wisdom, his wide-embracing knowledge of all varieties of men, his warmth of heart, his scorn of cunning, cruelty, and selfishness; his mastery over every passion, his insight into every hope or fear. But here we find him keeping an open court; not too lofty for our homage, but, like his own Theseus, cheerfully accepting our poor attempts to do him service, and warm ourselves at life's true Midsummer in his smile.

We hold within our grasp the very pages, printed without much typographical skill, that in those early days gave to so many a heart the first rapturous enjoyment of fairyland. It is our own fault if to us they bring less of pleasure. Well said the earliest editors of Shakespeare:—

“Reade him, therefore, and againe, and againe : And if then you doe not like him, surely you are in some manifest danger, not to understand him.”

J. WOODFALL EBSWORTH.

MOLASH VICARAGE, KENT,
MIDSUMMER-DAY, 1880.

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

[The two Quarto editions and the four Folio editions have no list of characters.
Rowe first added one, in 1709.]

THESEUS, *Duke of Athens.*

EGEUS, an Athenian Lord, *Father of Hermia.*

LYSANDER, } *in love with Hermia.*

DEMETRIUS, }

PHILOSTRATE, *Master of the Revels to Theseus.*

QUINCE, a Carpenter ;

SNUG, a Joiner ;

BOTTOM, a Weaver ;

FLUTE, a Bellows-mender ;

SNOUT, a Tinker ;

STARVELING, a Tailor ;

HIPPOLYTA, *Queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.*

HERMIA, *daughter of Egeus, in love with Lysander.*

HELENA, *in love with Demetrius.*

OBERON, *King of the Fairies.*

TITANIA, *Queen of the Fairies.*

PUCK, or ROBIN-GOODFELLOW, a Fairy.

PEAS-BLOSSOM, }

COBWEB, }

MOTH, }

MUSTARD-SEED, }

Fairies.

PYRAMUS, }

THISBE, }

WALL, }

MOONSHINE, }

LION, }

Characters in the Interlude, performed by the Clowns.

Other Fairies attendant on Oberon and Titania.

Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE varies, from the Palace of *Theseus* at *Athens*, and *Quince's* house, to a Wood in the neighbourhood.



A
 Midsommer nights
 dreame.

As it hath beene sundry times pub-
likely acted, by the Right Honoura-
 ble, the Lord Chamberlaine his
seruants.

Written by VVilliam Shakespeare.



Printed by Iames Roberts, 1600.



A MIDSOMMER NIGHTS DREAME.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, with others.

I.i.

Theseus.

Now faire *Hippolita*, our nuptiall houre
Drawes on apace : foure happy daies bring in
Another Moone : but oh, me-thinks, how slow
This old Moone wanes : She lingers my desires
Like to a Step-dam, or a Dowager,
Long withering out a young mans reueneue.

Hip. Foure daies will quickly sleepe themselves in nights
Foure daies will quickly dreame away the time :
And then the Moone, like to a siluer bow,
Now bent in heauen, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

The. Goe *Philstrate*,
Stirre vp the *Athenian* youth to merriments,
Awake the peart and nimble spirit of mirth,
Turne melancholy foorth to Funerals :
The pale companion is not for our pompe.
Hippolita, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And wonne thy loue, doing thee iniuries :
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pompe, with triumph, and with reuelling.

*Enter Egeus and his daughter Hermia, and Lysander,
Helena, and Demetrius.*

Ege. Happy be *Theseus*, our renowned Duke.

The. Thanks good *Egeus*. What's the newes with thee ?

Ege. Full of vexation, come I, with complaint

A 2

A-

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Against my childe, my daughter *Hermia*.

Stand forth Demetrius.

My noble Lord,

This man hath my consent to marry her

Stand forth Lysander.

And my gracious Duke,

This man hath bewicht the bosome of my childe :

Thou, thou *Lysander*, thou hast giuen her rimes,

And interchang'd loue tokens with my childe :

Thou hast by moone-light at her window sung,

With faining voice, verses of faining loue,

And stolne the impression of her fantasie,

With bracelets of thy haire, rings, gawdes, conceits,

Knacks, trifles, nosegaies, sweet meates (messengers

Of strong preuailment in vnhardened youth)

With cunning hast thou filcht my daughters heart,

Turnd her obedience (which is due to me)

To stubborne harshnesse. And my gracious Duke,

Be it so she will not here before your Grace,

Consent to marry with *Demetrius*,

I beg the ancient priuiledge of *Athens* ;

As she is mine, I may dispose of her ;

Which shall be either to this gentleman,

Or to her death, according to our law,

Immediately provided in that case.

The. What say you *Hermia* ? be aduis'd, faire maid,

To you your father shoud be as a God :

One that compos'd your beauties ; yea and one,

To whom you are but as a forme in wax

By him imprinted, and within his power,

To leaue the figure, or disfigure it :

Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Her. So is *Lysander*.

The. In himselfe he is.

But in this kinde, wanting your fathers voycc,

The other must be held the worthier.

Her.

A Midsommers nights Dreame.

57 *Her.* I would my father lookt but with my eyes,
The. Rather your eyes must with his iudgement looke.

Her. I do intreate your Grace to pardon me.
 I know not by what power I am made bold,
 61 Nor how it may concerne my modesty,
 In such a presence, here to plead my thoughts;
 But I beseech your Grace, that I may know
 The worst that may befall me in this case,
 65 If I refuse to wed *Demetrius*.

The. Either to die the death, or to abiure
 For euer the society of men.
 Therefore faire *Hermia*, question your desires,
 69 Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
 Whether (if you yeeld nor to your fathers choyce)
 You can endure the liuery of a Nunne,
 For aye to be in shady Cloister mew'd
 73 To liue a barren sister all your life,
 Chanting faint hymnes to the colde fruitlesse Moone.
 Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,
 To vndergoe such maiden pilgrimage,
 77 But earthlier happy is the Rose distild,
 Then that which withering on the virgin thorne,
 Growes, liues, and dies, in single blessednesse.

Her. So will I grow, so liue, so dye my Lord,
 81 Ere I will yeeld my virgin Patent vp
 Vnto his Lordship, whose vnwished yoake
 My soule consents not to giue souerainty.

The. Take time to pause, and by the next new Moone,
 85 The scaling day betwixt my loue and me,
 For euermlasting bond of fellowship:
 Vpon that day either prepare to dye,
 For disobedience to your fathers will,
 89 Or else to wed *Demetrius*, as he wold,
 Or on *Dianes* Altar to protest,
 For aye, austeritey, and single life.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Dem. Relent sweete *Hermia*, and *Lysander*, yeeld
Thy crazed title to my certaine right.

Lys. You haue her Fathers loue, *Demetrius* :
Let me haue *Hermias* : do you marry him.

Egeus. Scornfull *Lysander*, true, he hath my Loue ;
And what is mine, my loue shall render him.
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate vnto *Demetrius*.

Lysan. I am my Lord, as well deriu'd as hee,
As long posselt : my loue is more then his :
My fortunes euery way as fairely ranckt
(If not with vantage) as *Demetrius* :
And (which is more then all these boasts can be)
I am belou'd of beautious *Hermia*.

Why should not I then prosecute my right ?
Demetrius, Ile auouch it to his head,
Made loue to *Nedars* daughter, *Helena*,
And won her soule : and she (sweete Lady) dotes,
Deuoutly dotes, dotes in Idolatry,
Vpon this spotted and inconstant man.

The. I must confesse, that I haue heard so much,
And with *Demetrius*, thought to haue spoke thereof ;
But being ouer full of selfe-affaires,
My minde did lose it. But *Demetrius* come,
And come *Egeus*, you shall go with me,
I haue some priuate schooling for you both.
For you faire *Hermia*, looke you arme your selfe,
To fit your fancies to your fathers will ;
Or else the Law of *Athens* yeelds you vp
(Which by no meanes we may extenuate)
To death, or to a vow of single life.
Come my *Hippolita* ; what cheare my loue ?
Demetrius and *Egeus* goe along :
I must imploy you in some businesse
Against our nuptiall, and conferre with you

Of

A Midfommers nights Dreame.

Of something, neerely that concernes your selues.

Ege. With dury and desire, we follow you. *Exeunt.*

Lys. How now my loue ? Why is your cheeke so pale ?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast ?

Her. Belike for want of raine ; which I could well
Beteeme them, from the tempest of my eyes.

Lys. Eigh me ; for ought that I could euer reade,
Could euer heare by tale or history.

The course of true loue neuer did runne smoothe,
But either it was different in bloud ;

Her. O crosse ! too high to be inthrald to loue.

Lys. Or else misgraffed, in respect of yeares ;

Her. O spight ! too olde to be ingag'd to yong.

Lys. Or else it stood vpon the choise of friends ;

Her. O hell, to chooise loue by anothers eyes.

Lys. Or, if there were a simpathy in choise,

Warre, death, or sicknesse, did lay siedge to it ;

Making it momentany, as a sound ;

Swift as a shadow ; short as any dreame ;

Briefe as the lightening in the collied night,

That (in a spleene) vnfolde both heauen and earth ;

And ere a man hath power to say, behold,

The iawes of darknesse do deuoure it vp :

So quicke bright things come to confusion.

Her. If then true Louers haue bin euer crost,

It stands as an edict in destiny :

Then let vs teach our triall patience,

Because it is a customary crosse,

As due to loue, as thoughts, and dreames, and sighes,

Wishes and teares ; poore Fancies followers.

Lys. A good perswasion : therefore heare me, *Hermia* :

I haue a widow Ant, a dowager,

Of great reuenuenew, and she hath no childe,

From *Athens* is her house remote seuen leagues,

And she respects me, as her onely sonne :

There,

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

There gentle *Hermia*, may I marry thee,
 And to that place, the sharpe *Athenian* law
 Cannot pursue vs. If thou louest me, then
 Steale forth thy fathers house, to morrow night :
 And in the wood, a league without the towne
 (Where I did meete thee once with *Helena*,
 To do obseruance to a morne of May)
 There will I stay for thee.

Her. My good *Lyfander*,
 I sweare to thee, by *Cupids* strongest bow,
 By his best arrow, with the golden head,
 By the simplicity of *Venus* Doves,
 By that which knitteth foules, and prospers loue,
 And by that fire which burnd the Carthage Queene,
 When the false Trojan vnder sayle was seene,
 By all the vowes that euer men haue broke,
 (In number more then euer women spoke)
 In that same place thou hast appointed me,
 To morrow truly will I meete with thee.

Lyf. Keepe promise loue, looke here comes *Helena*.

Enter Helena.

Her. God speede faire *Helena*, whither away ?

Hel. Call you me faire ? that faire againe vsay,
Demetrius loues your faire : O happy faire !
 Your eys are loadstars, and your tongues sweet ayre
 More tuneable then Larke to Shepheards care,
 When wheate is greene, when hauthorne buds appeare,
 Sicknesse is catching : O vvere saueur so,
 Your vvords I catch, faire *Hermia* ere I goe,
 My eare should catch your voice, my eye, your eye,
 My tongue should catch your tongues sweet melody,
 Were the vvorld mine, *Demetrius* being bated,
 The rest Ile giue to be to you translated.
 O teach me how you looke, and vvith vvhat art,
 You fvvay the motion of *Demetrius* heart.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Her. I frowne vpon him, yet he loues me still.

Hel. O that your frowns wold teach my smiles such skil

Her. I giue him curses, yet he giues me loue.

Hel. O that my prayers could such affection mooue.

Her. The more I hate, the more he followes me.

Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, *Helena* is none of mine.

Hel. None but your beauty, wold that fault were mine.

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face,

Lysander and my selfe will fly this place.

Before the time I did *Lysander* see,

Seem'd *Athens* like a Paradise to me.

O then, what graces in my Loue do dwell,

That he hath turn'd a heauen into hell.

Lys. *Helena*, to you our mindes we will vnfold,

To morrow night, when *Phabe* doth behold

Her siluer visage, in the watry glasse,

Decking with liquid pearle, the bladed grasse

(A time, that louers flights doth still conceale)

Through *Athens* gates, haue we deuised to steale.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I,

Vpon faint Pimrose beds, were wont to lye,

Emptying our bosomes, of their counsell sweld,

There my *Lysander*, and my selfe shall meete,

And thence from *Athens* turne away our eyes

To seeke new friends and strange companions.

Farwell sweete play-fellow, pray thou for vs,

And good lucke grant thee thy *Demetrius*.

Keepe word *Lysander* we must starue our sight,

From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.

Exit Hermia.

Lys. I will my *Hermia*, *Helena* adieu,

As you on him, *Demetrius* dote on you. *Exit Lys.*

Hel. How happy some, ore other some can be?

Through *Athens* I am thought as faire as she.

B

But

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

But what of that? *Demetrius* thinkes not so:
 He will not knowe, what all, but hee doe know,
 And as hee erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes:
 So I, admiring of his qualities.
 Things base and vile, holding no quantitie,
 Loue can transpoe to forme and dignitie.
 Loue lookes not with the eyes, but with the minde:
 And therefore is wingd *Cupid* painted blinde.
 Nor hath loues minde of any iudgement taste:
 Wings, and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haste.
 And therefore is loue said to bee a childe:
 Because, in choyce, he is so oft beguil'd.
 As waggish boyes, in game, themselues forswear:
 So, the boy, Loue, is periur'd euery where.
 For, ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyen,
 Hee hayld downe othes, that he was onely mine.
 And when this haile some heate, from *Hermias*, felt,
 So he dissolued, and shewd of oathes did melt.
 I will goe tell him of faire *Hermias* flight:
 Then, to the wodde, will he, to morrow night,
 Pursue her: and for this intelligence,
 If I haue thanks, it is a deare expence:
 But hercin meane I to enrich my paine,
 To haue his sight thither, and back againe.

Exit.

*Enter Quince the Carpenter; and Snugge, the Ioyner; and
 Bottom, the Weaver; and Flute, the Bellows mender; &
 Snout, the Tinker; and Starueling the Tayler.*

Quin. Is all our company heere?

Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrippe.

Quin. Here is the scrowle of euery mans name, which is thought fit, through al *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude, before the Duke, & the Dutches, on his wedding day at night.
Bot. First good *Peester Quince*, say what the Play treats on: then read the names of the Actors: & so grow to a point.

Quin.

230

234

238

242

246

250

I.ii.

4

8

A Midfommer nightes dreame.

Quin. Mary, our Play is the most lamentable comedy,
and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisby*.

Bot. A very good peece of worke, I assure you, & a merry. Now good *Peeter Quince*, call forth your Actors, by the scrowle. Masters, spreade your selues.

Quin. Answer, as I call you. *Nick Bottom*, the Weauer?

Bot. Readie: Name what part I am for, and proceede.

Quin. You, *Nick Bottom* are set downe for *Pyramus*.

Bot. What is *Pyramus*? A louver; or a tyrant? -

Quin. A louver that kills himselfe, most gallant, for loue.

Bot. That will aske some teares in the true performing of it. If I doe it, let the Audience looke to their eyes: I wil moue stormes: I will condole, in some measure. To the rest yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play *Ercles* rarely, or a part to teare a Catin, to make all split the raging rocks: and shiuering shocks, shall breake the locks of prison gates, and *Phibbus* carre shall shine from farre, and make & marre the foolish Fates. This was lostie. Now, name the rest of the Players. This is *Ercles* vaine, at tyrants vaine: A louver is more condoling.

Quin. *Francis Flute*, the Bellowes mender?

Flu. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Flute*, you must take *Thisby*, on you.

Flu. What is *Thisby*? A wandring knight?

Quin. It is the Lady, that *Pyramus* must loue. (ming.

Fl. Nay faith: let not me play a womā: I haue a beard cō-

Quin. Thats all one: you shall play it in a Mask; and you may speake as small as you will.

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisby* to: Ile speake in a monstrous little voice; *Thisne*, *Thisne*, ah *Pyramus*, my louver deare, thy *Thisby* deare, & Lady deare.

Qu. No, no: you must play *Pyramus*: & *Flute*, you *Thisby*.

Bot. Well, proceede. *Qui.* *Robin Starveling*, the Tailor?

Star. Here *Peeter Quince*.

Quin. *Robin Starveling*, you must play *Thisbyes* mothers

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Tom Snowt, the Tinker.

Snowt. Here *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You, *Pyramus* father; my selfe, *Thisbies* father; *Snugge* the Ioyner, you the Lyons part: and I hope here is a play fitted.

Snug. Haue you the Lyons part written? pray you if it be, giue it me, for I am slowe of study.

Quin. You may do it *extempore*, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bot. Let me play the Lyon too, I will roare, that I will do any mans heart good to heare me. I will roare, that I will make the Duke say, Let him roare againe, let him roare againe.

Quin. If you should do it too terribly, you would fright the Dutcheffe and the Ladies, that they would strike, and that were enough to hang vs all.

All. That would hang vs euery mothers sonne.

Bot. I grant you friends, if you should fright the Ladies out of their wits, they would haue no more discretion but to hang vs: but I will aggravate my voyce so, that I will roare you as gently as any sucking Doue; I will roare you and t'were any Nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but *Pyramus*, for *Pyramus* is a sweet fac't man, a proper man as one shal see in a Sommers day; a most louely gentlemanlike man, therefore you must needs play *Pyramus*.

Bot. Well, I will vndertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it, in eyther your straw-colour beard, your orange tawny beard, your purple in graine beard, or your french crowne colour beard, your perfit yellow.

Quin. Some of your french crownes haue no haire at all; and then you will play bare fac't. But masters heere are your parts, and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you,

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A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Her. Ifrowne vpon him, yet he loues me still.

Hel. O that your frowns wold teach my smiles such skil

Her. I giue him curses, yet he giues me loue.

Hel. O that my prayers could such affection moue.

Her. The more I hate, the more he followes me.

Hel. The more I loue, the more he hateth me.

Her. His folly, *Helena* is none of mine.

Hel. None but your beauty, wold that fault were mine.

Her. Take comfort: he no more shall see my face,

Lysander and my selfe will fly this place.

Before the time I did *Lysander* see,

Seem'd *Athens* like a Paradiſe to me.

O then, what graces in my Loue do dwell,

That he hath turn'd a heauen into hell.

Lys. *Helen*, to you our mindes we will vnfold,

To morrow night, when *Phæbe* doth behold

Her ſiluer viſage, in the watry glaſſe,

Decking with liquid pearle, the bladed graſſe

(A time, that louers flights doth ſtill conceale)

Through *Athens* gates, haue we deuſed to ſteale.

Her. And in the wood, where often you and I,

Vpon faint Pimroſe beds, were wont to lye,

Emptying our boſomes, of their counſell ſweld,

There my *Lysander*, and my ſelfe ſhall meete,

And thence from *Athens* turne away our eyes

To ſeeke new friends and ſtrange companions.

Farwell ſweete play-fellow, pray thou for vs,

And good lucke grant thee thy *Demetrius*,

Keepe word *Lysander*. we muſt ſtarue our ſight,

From louers foode, till morrow deepe midnight.

Exit Hermia.

Lys. I will my *Hermia*. *Helena* adieu,

As you on him, *Demetrius* dote on you,

Exit Lys.

Hel. How happy ſome, ore other ſome can be?

Through *Athens* I am thought as faire as ſhe.

B

But

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

But what of that? *Demetrius* thinks not so :
 He will not know, what all, but he do know,
 And as he erres, doting on *Hermias* eyes;
 So I, admiring of his qualities :
 Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
 Loue can transpose to forme and dignity,
 Loue looks not with the eyes, but with the minde,
 And therefore is wingd *Cupid* painted blinde.
 Nor hath loues miude of any iudgement taste :
 Wings, and no eyes, figure, vnheedy haste.
 And therefore is loue said to be a childe,
 Because in choise he is oft beguilde,
 As waggish boyes in game themselues forswear;
 So the boy Loue is perjur'd euery where.
 For ere *Demetrius* lookt on *Hermias* eyne,
 He haild downe oathes that he was onely mine.
 And when his haile, some heate from *Hermia* felt,
 So he dissolu'd, and showres of oathes did melt,
 I will go tell him of faire *Hermias* flight :
 Then to the wood will he, to morrow night
 Pursue her ; and for this intelligence,
 If I haue thanks, it is a deare expence :
 But heerein meane I to enrich my paine,
 To haue his sight thither, and backe againe.

Exit.

Enter Quince the Carpenter, Snug the Ioyner, Bottome the Weaver, Flute the Bellows-mender, Snout the Tinker, & Starue the Taylor.

Quin. Is all our company heere?

Bot. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according the scrippe.

Quin. Here is the scrowle of euery mans name, which is thoght fit through all *Athens*, to play in our Enterlude, before the Duke & the Dutches, on his wedding day at night,

Bot. First good *Peter Quince*, say what the play treats on: then read the names of the Actors : and so grow to a point.

Quince.

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Lii

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A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Quin. Marry our play is the most lamentable Comedy,
and most cruell death of *Pyramus* and *Thisbe*,

Bot. A very good peece of worke, I assure you, & a merry.
Now good *Peter Quince*, call foorth your Actors by the
scrowle. Masters spread your selues.

Quin. Answer as I call you, *Nick Bottome* the Weauer.

Bot. Ready; name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quin. You *Nick Bottome* are set downe for *Pyramus*.

Bot. What is *Pyramus*, a loue, or a tyrant?

Quin. A loue that kils himselfe most gallant, for loue.

Bot. That will aske some reares in the true performing
of it, if I doe it, let the audience looke to their eyes: I will
moue stormes; I will condole in some measure. To the rest
yet, my chiefe humour is for a tyrant. I could play *Ercles*
rarely, or a part to reare a Cat in, to make all split the raging
Rocks; and shiuering shocks shall breake the locks of pri-
son gates, and *Phibbus* carre shall shine from farre, & make
and marre the foolish Fates. This was lofty. Now name
the rest of the players. This is *Ercles* vaine, a tyrants vaine:
a loue is more condoling.

Quin. *Francis Flute* the Bellowes-mender.

Flu. Heere *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You must take *Thisby* on you.

Flu. What is *Thisby*? a wandring Knight?

Quin. It is the Lady that *Pyramus* must loue. (ming

Flu. Nay faith, let not me play a woman, I haue a beard co-

Quin. That's al one, you shal play it in a Maske, and you
may speake as small as you will,

Bot. And I may hide my face, let me play *Thisby* to: He
speake in a monstrous little voyce; *Thisbe*, *Thisbe*, ah *Pyra-*
mus my loue deare, thy *Thisby* deare, and Lady deare.

Quin. No no, you must play *Pyramus*, & *Flute*, you *Thisby*.

Bot. Well, proceed. *Qu.* *Robin Starueling* the Tailor:

Star. Heere *Peter Quince*.

Qu. *Robin Starueling*, you must play *Thisbies* mother:

A Midsommer nights Dreame.

Tom Snowt, the Tinker.

Snowt. Here *Peter Quince*.

Quin. You, *Pyramus* father ; my selfe, *Thybies* father ;
Snugge the Ioyner, you the Lyons part : and I hope here is
a play fitted.

Snug. Haue you the Lyons part written ? pray you if it
be, giue it me, for I am slowe of study.

Quin. You may do it *extempore*, for it is nothing but
roaring.

Bot. Let me play the Lyon too, I will roare, that I will
do any mans heart good to heare me, I will roare, that I
will make the Duke say, Let him roare again, let him roare
againc.

Quin. If you should do it too terribly, you would fright
the Dutchesse and the Ladies, that they would shrike, and
that were enough to hang vs all.

All. That would hang vs euery mothers sonne.

Bot. I grant you friends, if you should fright the Ladies
out of their wits, they would haue no more discretion but
to hang vs : but I will aggrauate my voyce so, that I will
roare you as gently as any sucking Doue ; I will roare you
and t'were any Nightingale.

Quin. You can play no part but *Piramus*, for *Piramus* is
a sweet fac't man, a proper man as one shal see in a sommers
day ; a most louely gentlemanlike man, therefore you must
needs play *Piramus*.

Bot. Well, I will vndertake it, What beard were I best to
play it in ?

Quin. Why, what you will.

Bot. I will discharge it, in cyther your straw-colour beard,
your orange tawny beard, your purple in graine beard, or
your french crowne colour beard, your perfitt yellow.

Quin. Some of your french crownes haue no haire at all ;
and then you will play bare fac't. But masters heere are
your parts, and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire
you,

Lii.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

79 you, to con them by too morrow night: and meete me in
the palace wood, a mile without the towne, by Moone-
light, there we will rehearse: for if we meete in the Cittry,
83 we shall be dogd with company, and our deuises knowne.
In the meane time, I will draw a bill of properties, such as
our play wants. I pray you faile me not.

Bot. We will meete, and there we may rehearse more
obscenely and couragiously. Take paines, be perfit, adieu.

87 *Quin.* At the Dukes oke we meete.

Bot. Enough, hold or cut bow-strings. *Exeunt.*

*Enter a fairy at one doore, and Robin good-fellow
at another.*

Robin. How now spirit, whether wander you?

Fai. Ouer hill, ouer dale, through bush, through brier,
Ouer parke, ouer pale, through flood, through fire,
4 I do wander euery where, swifter then the Moons sphere;
And I serue the Fairy Queene, to dew her orbes vpon the
The cowslips tall, her pensioners be, (greene.
In their gold coats, spots you see,
8 Those be Rubies. Fairy fauours,
In those freckles, line their fauours,
I must goe seeke some dew drops here,
And hang a pearle in euery cowslips eare.
12 Farwell thou Lob of spirits, Ile be gone,
Our Queene and all her Elues come here anon.

Rob. The King doth keepe his Reuels heere to night,
Take heed the Queene come not within his sight,
16 For *Oberon* is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she, as her attendant, hath
A louely boy stollen from an Indian king,
She neuer had so sweete a changeling,
20 And ieaious *Oberon* would haue the childe,
Knight of his traine, to trace the Forrests wilde.
But she, perforce with-holds the loued boy,
Crownes him with flowers, and makes him all her ioy.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

And now they neuer meete in groue, or greene,
By fountaine cleere, or spangled starlight sheene,
But they do square, that all their Elues for feare
Creepe into acorne cups, and hide them there.

Fai. Either I mistake your shape and making quice,
Or else you are that shrewd and knauish spirit,
Call'd *Robin good-fellow*. Are you not hee,
That frights the maidens of the Villagrec,
Skim milke, and sometimes labour in the querne,
And bootlesse make the breathlesse hufwife cherne,
And sometime make the drinke to beare no barme,
Mis-leade night-wanderers, laughing at their harme,
Those that hobgoblin call you, and sweete Puck,
You do their worke, and they shall haue good lucke.
Are not you he? (the night,

Rob. Thou speak'st aright; I am that merry wanderer of
I easte to *Oberon*, and make him smile,
When I a fat and beane-fed horse beguile;
Neighing in likenesse of a silly foale,
And sometime lurke I in a gossips bole,
In very likenesse of a rosted crab,
And when she drinke, against her lips I bob,
And on her withered dewlop poure the ale.
The wisest Aunt telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three foote stoole, mistaketh me,
Then slip I from her bum, downe topples she,
And tailour cryes, and fals into a coffe,
And then the whole Quire hold their hips, and loffe,
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and sweare,
A merrier houre was neuer wasted there.
But roome Fairy, here comes *Oberon*.

Fai. And here my mistresse: would that he were gone.

*Enter the King of Fairies at one doore with his traine,
and the Queene at another with hers.*

Ob. Ill met by moone-light, proud *Tytania*.

Queen.

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A Midsummer nights Dreame.

57 *Queen.* What, iealous *Oberon* ? Fairy skip hence.
I haue forsworne his bed and company.

Ob. Tarry rash wanton ; am not I thy Lord ?

61 *Qu.* Then I must be thy Lady : but I know
When thou hast stollen away from Fairy Land,

And in the shape of *Corin*, sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corne, and versing loue,

To amorous *Phillida*. Why art thou here

65 Come from the farthest steepe of *India* ?

But that forsooth the bouncing *Amazon*,
Your buskind mistresse, and your warrior loue,

To *Theseus* must be wedded ; and you come,

69 To giue their bed ioy and prosperity.

Ob. How canst thou thus for shame, *Tytania*,
Glance at my credite, with *Hippolita* ?

Knowing I know thy loue to *Theseus*.

73 Didst not thou leade him through the glimmering night,
From *Perigenia*, whom he rauished ?

And make him with faire Eagles breake his faith

With *Ariadne*, and *Antiopa* ?

77 *Queen.* These are the forgeries of iealousie,

And neuer since the middle Sommers spring,

Met we on hill, in dale, forrest or mead,

81 By paued fountaine, or by rushy brooke,

Or in the beached margent of the sea,

To dance our ringlets to the whistling winde,
But with thy brawles thou hast disturbd our sport.

Therefore the windes, pyeping to vs in vaine,

85 As in reuenge, haue suckt vp from the sea,

Contagious fogs ; which falling in the Land,

Hath euery pelting riuer made so proud,

That they haue ouer-borne their Continents.

89 The Oxe hath therefore stretcht his yoke in vaine,

The ploughman lost his sweat, and the greene Corne

Hath rotted, ere his youth attained a beard :

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

The fold stands empty, in the drowned field,
 And Crowes are fatted with the murriion flocks,
 The nine mens Morris is fild vp with mud,
 And the queint Mazes in the wanton greene,
 For lacke of tread, are vndistinguishable.
 The humane mortals want their winter heere,
 No night is now with hymne or carroll blest;
 Therefore the Moone (the gouernesse of floods)
 Pale in her anger, washes all the aire;
 That Rheumaticke diseases do abound.
 And through this distemperature, we see
 The seasons alter; hoared headed frosts
 Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson Rose,
 And on old *Hyems* chinne and Icie crowne,
 An odorous Chaplet of sweete Sommer buds
 Is as in mockery set, The Spring, the Sommer,
 The childing Autumne, angry Winter change
 Their wonted Liueries, and the mazed world,
 By their increase, now knowes not which is which;
 And this same progeny of euils,
 Comes from our debate, from our dissention,
 We are their parents and originall.

Oberon. Do you amend it then, it lyes in you,
 Why should *Titania* crosse her *Oberon*?
 I do but beg a little changeling boy,
 To be my Henchman.

Queen. Set your heart at rest,
 The Fairy land buies not the childe of me,
 His mother was a Votresse of my order,
 And in the spiced *Indian* aire, by night
 Full often hath she gossip by my side,
 And sat with me on *Neptunes* yellow sands,
 Marking th'embarked traders on the flood,
 When we haue laught to see the sailes conceiue,
 And grow big bellied with the wanton winde,

Which

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A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Which she with pretty and with swimming gate,
Following (her wombe then rich with my young squire)
Would imitate, and saile vpon the Land,

To fetch me trifles, and returne againe,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandize,
But she being mortall, of that boy did dye,

And for her sake do I reare vp her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Ob. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Queen. Perchance till after *Theseus* wedding day.

If you will patiently dance in our Round,
And see our Moone-light reuels, go with vs;
If not, shun me and I will spare your haunts.

Ob. Giue me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Qu. Not for thy Fairie Kingdome, Fairies away:

We shall chide downe right, if I longer stay. *Exeunt*

Ob. Well, go thy way: thou shalt not from this groue,
Till I torment thee for this iniury.

My gentle *Pucke* come hither; thou remembrest

Since once I sat vpon a promontory,

And heard a Meare-maide on a Dolphins backe,

Vttering such dulcet and harmonious breath,

That the rude sea grew ciuill at her song,

And certaine starres shot madly from their Spheares,

To heare the Sea-maids musicke.

Puc. I remember.

Ob. That very time I say (but thou couldst not)

Flying betweene the colde Moone and the earth,

Cupid all arm'd; a certaine aime he tooke

At a faire Vestall, throned by West,

And loos'd his loue-shaft smartly from his bow,

As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts,

But I might see young *Cupids* fiery shaft

Quencht in the chaste beames of the watry Moone;

And the imperiall Votresse passed on,

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In

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

In maiden meditation, fancy free.

Yet markt I where the bolt of *Cupid* fel.

It fell vpon a little westerne flower ;

Before, milke-white ; now purple with loues wound,

And maidens call it, Loue in idlenesse.

Fetch me that flower ; the hearb I shew'd thee once,

The iuyce of it, on sleeping eye-lids laide,

Will make or man or woman madly dote

Vpon the next liue creature that it sees.

Fetch me this hearbe, and be thou here againe,

Ere the *Leuiathan* can swim a league.

Pu. Ile put a girdle about the earth, in forty minutes.

Oberon. Hauing once this iuyce,

Ile watch *Titania*, whence she is asleepe,

And drop the liquor of it in her eyes :

The next thing when she waking lookes vpon,

(Be it on Lyon, Beare, or Wolfe, or Bull,

On medling Monkey, or on busie Ape)

She shall pursue it, with the soule of loue.

And ere I take this charme off from her sight,

(As I can take it with another hearbe)

Ile make her render vp her Page to me.

But who comes heere ? I am inuisible,

And I will ouer-heare their conference.

Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.

Deme. I loue thee not, therefore pursue me not,

Where is *Lysander* and faire *Hermia* ?

The one Ile stay, the other stayeth me.

Thou toldst me they were stolne vnto this wood ;

And here am I and wood within this wood,

Because I cannot meete my *Hermia*.

Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Hel. You draw me, you hard-hearted Adamant,

But yet you draw not Iron, for my heart

Is true as Steele. Leauē you your power to draw,

And

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II.i.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

And I shall haue no power to follow you.

Dem. Do I entice you ? do I speake you faire ?

Or rather do I not in plainest truth,

Tell you I do not, not I cannot loue you ?

Hel. And euen for that do I loue thee the more ;

I am your spaniell, and *Demetrius*,

The more you beate me, I will sawne on you,

Vse me but as your spaniell ; spurne me, strike me,

Neglect me, lose me ; onely giue me leaue

(Vnworthy as I am) to follow you.

What worser place can I beg in your loue,

(And yet a place of high respect with me)

Then to be vsed as you vse your dog.

Dem. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit,

For I am sicke when I do looke on thee.

Hel. And I am sicke when I looke not on you.

Dem. You do impeach your modesty too much,

To leaue the City, and commit your selfe

Into the hands of one that loues you not,

To trust the opportunity of night,

And the ill counsell of a desert place,

With the rich worth of your virginity.

Hel. Your vertue is my priuiledge : for that

It is not night when I do see your face.

Therefore I thinke I am not in the night,

Nor doth this wood lacke worlds of company,

For you in my respect are all the world.

Then how can it be said I am alone,

When all the world is here to looke on me ?

Dem. Ile run from thee, and hide me in the brakes,

And leaue thee to the mercy of wilde Beasts.

Hel. The wildest hath not such a heart as you ;

Runne when you will, the story shall be chaung'd :

Apollo flies, and *Daphna* holds the chase ;

The Doue pursues the Griffen, the milde Hinde

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Makes speed to catch the Tygre, Bootlesse speede,
When cowardise pursues, and valor flies.

Demet. I will not stay thy questions, let me go ;
Or if thou follow me, do not belecue,
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.

Hel. I, in the Temple, in the Towne, and Field
You do me mischief. Fye *Demetrius*,
Your wrongs do set a scandall on my sex :
We cannot fight for loue, as men may do ;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to wooe.
He follow thee and make a heauen of hell,
To dye vpon the hand I loue so well.

Exit.

Ob. Fare thee well Nymph, ere he do leaue this groue,
Thou shalt flye him, and he shall seeke thy loue.
Hast thou the flower there ? Welcome wanderer.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. I, there it is.

Ob. I pray thee giue it me.

I know a banke where the wilde time blowes,
Where Oxslips and the nodding Violet growes,
Quite ouercanoped with lushious woodbine,
With sweete muske roses, and with Eglantine ;
There sleepes *Tytania*, sometime of the night,
Luld in these flowers, with dances and delight :
And there the snake throwes her enammeld skinne,
Weed wide enough to rap a Fairy in.

And with the iuyce of this, He streake her eyes,
And make her full of hatefull fantasies.

Take thou some of it, and seeke through this groue ;
A sweete *Athenian* Lady is in loue

With a disdainefull youth : annoint his eyes,
But do it when the next thing he espies,
May be the Lady. Thou shalt know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on.

Effect it vvith some care, that he may prouoe

More

II.

A Midsommers nights Dreame.

More fond on her, then she vpon her loue ;
And looke thou meete me ere the first Cocke crow.

Pu. Feare not my Lord, your seruant shall do so. *Exeunt.*

Enter Queene of Fairies, with her traine.

Queen. Come, now a Roundell, and a Fairy song ;
Then for the third part of a minute hence,
Some to kill cankers in the muske rose buds,
Some warre with Reremise, for their leathern wings,
To make my small Elues coates, and some keepe backe
The clamorous Owle, that nightly hootes and wonders
At our queint spirits : Sing me now asleepe,
Then to your offices, and let me rest.

Fairies sing.

*You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny Hedgehogges be not seene,
Newts and blinde wormes do no wrong
Come not neere our Fairy queene,
Philomele with melody,
Sing in our sweett Lullaby,
Lulia, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby,
Neuer harme, nor spell, nor charme,
Come our lousy Lady nye.
So good night with Lullaby.*

1. Fairy. Weaving Spiders come not heere,
Hence you long legd Spinders, hence :
Beetles blacke approach not neere ;
Worme nor Snayle do no offence.
Philomele with melody, &c.

2. Fai. Hence away, now all is well ;
One aloofe, stand Centinell.

Enter Oberon.

Ob. What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy thy true loue take :
Loue and languish for his sake.
Be it Ounce, or Catte, or Beare,

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Pard.

A Midfommer nights Drea me.

Pard, or Boare with bristled haire,
In thy eye that shall appeare,
When thou wak'st, it is thy deare,
Wake when some vile thing is neere.

Enter Lysander and Hermia.

Lys. Faire loue, you faint with wandring in the woods,
And to speake troth I haue forgot our way :
Wee'l rest vs *Hermia*, if you thinke it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Her. Be it so *Lysander* ; finde you out a bed,
For I vpon this banke will rest my head.

Lys. One turffe shall serue as pillow for vs both,
One heart, one bed, two bosomes, and one troth.

Her. Nay good *Lysander* for my sake my deare
Lie further off yet, do not lie so neere.

Lys. O take the sence sweete, of my innocence,
Loue takes the meaning, in loues conference,
I meane that my heart vnto yours is knit,
So that but one heart we can make of it.
Two bosomes interchained with an oath,
So then two bosomes, and a single troth.
Then by your side, no bed-roume me deny,
For lying so, *Hermia*, I do not lye.

Her. *Lysander* riddles very prettily ;
Now much beshrew my manners and my pride,
If *Hermia* meant to say, *Lysander* lied.
But gentle friend, for loue and courtesie
Lie further off, in humane modesty,
Such separation, as may well be said,
Becomes a vertuous batchellor, and a maide,
So farre be distant, and good night sweet friend,
Thy loue nere alter till thy sweete life ende.

Lys. Amen amen, to that faire praler, say I,
And then end life, when I end loialty :
Heere is my bed, sleepe giue thee all his rest.

Her.

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A Midfommers nights Dreame.

Her. With halfe that with the wishers eyes be prest.

Enter Pucke.

Puck, Through the Forrest haue I gone,
But *Athenian* finde I none,

On whose eies I might approue
This flowers force in stirring loue.

Night and silence: who is heere?
VVeedes of *Athens* he doth weare:

This is he (my master said)

Despised the *Athenian* maide:

And heere the maiden sleeping sound,
On the danke and dirty ground.

Pretty soule, she durst not lye
Neere this lack loue, this kill-curtisie.

Churle, vpon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charme doth owe:

VVhen thou wak'st, let loue forbid

Sleepe his seate, on thy eye-lid.

So awake when I am gone:

For I must now to *Oberon*.

Exit.

Enter Demetrius and Helena running.

Hel. Stay, though thou kill me, sweete *Demetrius*.

De. I charge thee hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Hel. O wilt thou darkling leaue me? do not so.

De. Stay on thy perill, I alone will goe.

Hel. O I am out of breath, in this fond chase,

The more my praier, the lesser is my grace.

Happy is *Hermia*, wherefoere she lies;

For she hath blessed and attractiue eyes.

How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt teares.

If so, my eies are oftner washt then hers.

No, no, I am as vgly as a Beare;

For beasts that meete me, runne away for feare,

Therefore no maruaile, though *Demetrius*

Do as a monster, flie my preface thus.

VVhat

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

What wicked and dissembling glasse of mine,
Made me compare with *Hermias* sphery cyne?
But who is here, *Lyfander* on the ground?
Dead or asleepe? I see no blood, no wound,
Lyfander, if you liue, good sir awake.

Lyf. And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.
Transparant *Helena*, nature shewes arte,
That through thy bosome makes me see thy heart.
Where is *Demetrius*? oh how fit a word
Is that vile name, to perish on my sword!

Hel. Do not say so *Lyfander*, say not so:
What though he loue your *Hermia*? Lord, what though?
Yet *Hermia* still loues you; then be content,

Lyf. Content with *Hermia*? No, I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her haue spent.

Not *Hermia*, but *Helena* now I loue;
Who will not change a Rauens for a Doue?
The will of man is by his reason swar'd:
And reason saies you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe vntill their season;
So I being young, till now ripe not to reason,
And touching now the point of humane skill,
Reason becomes the Marshall to my will,
And leads me to your eyes, where I orelooke
Loues stories, written in Loues richest booke.

Hel. Wherefore was I to this keene mockery borne?
When at your hands did I deserue this scorne?
Is't not enough, is't not enough, young man,
That I did neuer, no nor neuer can,
Deserue a sweete looke from *Demetrius* eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth you do me wrong (good-sooth you do)
In such disdainfull manner, me to wooe.
But fare you well; perforce I must confesse,
I thought you Lord of more true gentlenesse.

Oh,

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Ilii.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

132 Oh, that a Lady of one man reſvs'd,
Should of another therefore be abus'd. *Exit.*

Lyf. She ſees not *Hermia* : *Hermia*, ſleepe thou there,
And neuer maiſt thou come *Lyſander* neere;
136 For as a ſurfet of the ſweeteſt things
The deepeſt loathing to the ſtomacke brings;
Or as the hereſies that men do leaue,
Are hated moſt of thoſe they did deceiue :
140 So thou, my ſurfet, and my hereſie,
Of all be hated ; but the moſt of me ;
And all my powers addreſſe your loue and might,
To honour *Helen*, and to be her Knight. *Exit.*

144 *Her.* Helpe me *Lyſander*, helpe me; do thy beſt
To plucke this crawling ſerpent from my breſt.
Aye me, for pittie; what a dreame was here ?
Lyſander looke, how I do quake with feare :
148 Me-thought a ſerpent eate my heart away,
And you ſat ſmiling at his cruell prey.
Lyſander, what remoou'd ? *Lyſander*, Lord,
What, out of hearing, gone ? No ſound, no word ?
152 Alacke where are you ? ſpeake and if you heare ;
Speake of all loues ; I ſwound almoſt with feare.
No, then I well perceiue you are not nye,
Eythre death or you ile finde immediately. *Exit.*

Enter the Clownes.

Bot. Are we all met ?

4 *Quin.* Pat, pat, and heres a maruailous conuenient place
for our rehearſall. This greene plor ſhall be our ſtage, this
hauthorne brake our tyring houſe, and we will doe it in ac-
tion, as we will do it before the Duke.

Bot. *Peter* quince ?

Peter. What ſaiſt thou, bully *Bottom* ?

8 *Bot.* There are things in this Comedy of *Piramus* and
Thisby, that will neuer pleaſe. Firſt, *Piramus* muſt draw a
ſword to kill himſelfe ; which the Ladyes cannot abide.

D

How

Ilii.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

How answer you that ?

Snout. Berlaken, a parlous feare.

Star. I beleeue we must leaue the killing out, when all is done.

Bot. Not a whit, I haue a deuice to make all well. Write me a Prologue, and let the Prologue seeme to say, wee will do no harme with our swords, and that *Pyramus* is not kild indeed ; and for the more better assurance, tell them that I *Pyramus* am not *Pyramus*, but *Bottom* the Weauer ; this will put them out of feare.

Quin. Well, we will haue such a Prologue, and it shall be written in eight and sixe.

Bot. No, make it two more, let it be written in eight & eight.

Snout. Will not the Ladies be afeard of the Lyon ?

Star. I feare it, I promise you.

Bot. Masters, you ought to confider with your selfe, to bring in (God shield vs) a Lyon among Ladies, is a most dreadfull thing. For there is not a more fearefull wilde fowle then your Lyon liuing; and we ought to looke to it.

Snout. Therefore another Prologue must tell he is not a Lyon.

Bot. Nay, you must name his name, and halfe his face must be seene through the Lyons necke, and hee himselfe must speake through, saying thus, or to the same deffect; Ladies, or faire Ladies, I would wish you, or I would request you, or I would entreat you, not to feare, not to tremble : my life for yours. If you thinke I come herher as a Lyon, it were pittie of my life. No, I am no such thing, I am a man as other men are ; and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is *Snug* the ioyner.

Quin. Well, it shall be so ; but there is two hard things, that is, to bring the Moone-light into a chamber : for you know, *Pyramus* and *Thisby* meete by Moone-light.

Sn. Doth the Moone shine that night we play our play ?

Bot.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Bottom. A Calender, a Calender, looke in the Almanack,
finde out Moone-shine, finde out Mooneshine.

Quin. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bot. Why then may you leaue a casement of the great
chamber window (where we play) open, and the Moone
may shine in at the casement.

Quin. I, or else one must come in with a bush of thorns, &
a lanthorne, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present the
person of Moone-shine. Then there is another thing, we
must haue a wall in the great Chamber; for *Piramus* and
Thisby (saies the story) did talke through the chinke of a
wall.

Sn. You can neuer bring in a wall. What say you *Bottom*?

Bot. Some man or other must present wall, and let him
haue some plaster, or some lome, or some rough cast about
him, to signifie wall; or let him hold his fingers thus; and
through that cranny, shall *Piramus* and *Thisby* whisper.

Quin. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit downe e-
uery mothers sonne, and rehearse your parts. *Piramus*, you
begin; when you haue spoken your speech, enter into that
Brake, and so euery one according to his cue.

Enter Robin.

Rob. What hempen home-spuns haue we swagging here,
So neere the Cradle of the Fairy Queene?
What, a play toward? Ile be an auditor,
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quin. Speake *Piramus*, *Thisby* stand forth.

Pir. *Thisby*, the flowers of odious sauors sweete.

Quin. Odours, odorous.

Pir. Odours sauors sweete,

So hath thy breath, my dearest *Thisby* deare.
But harke, a voyce: stay thou but heere a while,
And by and by I will to thee appeare.

Exit.

Quin. A stranger *Piramus* then ere plaid here.

Thif. Must I speake now?

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Pet. I marry must you. For you must vnderstand he goes but to see a noyse that he heard, and is to come againe.

Thys. Most radiant *Piramus*, most Lilly white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant bryer,
Most brisky Iuuenall, and eke most louely Iew,
As true as truest horse, that yet would neuer tyre,
He meete thee *Piramus*, at *Ninnies* toombe.

Pet. *Ninus* toombe man: why you must not speake that yet; that you answer to *Piramus*: you speake all your part at once, cues and al. *Piramus* enter, your cue is past; it is neuer tyre.

Thys. O, as true as truest horse, that yet would neuer tyre.

Pir. If I were faire, *Thisby* I were onely thine.

Pet. O monstrous. O strange. We are haunted; pray masters fye masters, helpe.

Rob. He follow you, He leade you about a Round,
Through bogge, through bush, through brake, through
Sometime a horse He be, sometime a hound, (bryer
A hogge, a headlesse beare, sometime a fire,
And neigh, and barke, and grunt, and rore, and burne,
Like horse, heund, hog, beare, fire, at euery turne. *Exit.*

Bot. Why do they run away? This is a knauery of them to make me afeard.

Enter Snaws.

Sn. O *Bottom*, thou art chang'd; what do I see on thee?

Bot. What do you see? you see an asse head of your own. Do you?

Enter Peter quince.

Pet. Blesse thee *Bottom*, blesse thee; thou art translated.

Exit.

Bot. I see their knauery; this is to make an asse of me, to fright me if they could; but I will not stir from this place, do what they can. I will walke vp and downe heere, and I will sing that they shall heare I am not afraid.
The Woofell cocke, so blacke of hew,
With Orange tawny bill,

The

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

The Throftle, with his note fo true,

The Wren with little quill.

Tytania. What Angell wakes me from my flowry bed ?

Bot. The Finch, the Sparrow, and the Larke,

The plainsong Cuckow gray ;

Whose note full many a man doth marke,

And dares not answer, nay.

For indeed, who would fet his wit to fo foolish a bird ?

Who would giue a bird the lye, though he cry Cuckow, neuer so ?

Tyta. I pray thee gentle mortall, sing againe,

Mine eare is much enamored of thy note ;

On the first view to say, to sweare I loue thee.

So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,

And thy faire vertues force (perforce) doth moue me,

Bot. Me-thinks mistresse, you should haue little reason for that : and yet to say the truth, reason and loue keepe little company together, now adayes. The more the pittie, that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay I can gleeke vpon occasion.

Tyta. Thou art as wise, as thou art beautifull.

Bot. Not so neither : but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I haue enough to serue mine owne turne.

Tyta. Out of this wood, do not desire to goe,

Thou shalt remaine here, whether thou wilt or no.

I am a spirit of no common rate :

The Sommer still doth tend vpon my state,

And I do loue thee ; therefore go with me,

He giue thee Fairies to attend on thee ;

And they shall fetch thee Jewels from the deepe,

And sing, while thou on pressed flowers dost sleepe .

And I will purge thy mortall grossenesse so,

That thou shalt like an ayry spirit go.

Pease-blossome, Cobweb, Moth, and Mustard-seed.

Enter foure Fairies.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Fai. Ready ; and *I*, and *I*, and *I*. Where shall we go ?

Tita. Be kinde and curteous to this Gentleman,
Hop in his walkes, and gambole in his eies,
Feede him with Apricocks, and Dewberries,
With purple Grapes, greene Figs, and Mulberries,
The hony bags steale from the humble Bees,
And for night tapers, crop their waxen thighes,
And light them at the fiery Glow-wormes eies,
To haue my loue to bed, and to arise
And plucke the wings from painted Butterflies,
To fanne the Moone-beames from his sleeping eyes,
Nod to him Elues, and do him curtesies.

1. *Fai.* Haile mortall, haile.

2. *Fai.* Haile.

3. *Fai.* Haile.

Bot. I cry your worships mercy hartily ; I beseech your worships name.

Cob. *Cobweb.*

Bot. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master *Cobweb* : if *I* cut my finger, *I* shall make bold with you. Your name honest gentleman ?

Peaf. *Pease-blossome.*

Bot. I pray you commend me to mistresse *Squash*, your Mother, and to master *Peascod* your Father. Good master *Pease-blossome*, *I* shall desire you of more acquaintance to. Your name I beseech you sir ?

Mus. *Mustard seede.*

Bot. Good master *Mustard seed*, I know your patience well : that same cowardly gyant-like Oxe-beefe hath deuoured many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you more acquaintance, good Master *Mustardseed*.

Tita. Come waite vpon him, leade him to my bower.
The Moone me-thinks, lookes with a watry eie,
And when she weepes, weepe euery little flower,

Lamen-

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III.i.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Lamenting some enforced chastity.

Tye vp my louers tongue, bring him silently.

Exit.

Enter King of Fairies, and Robin good-fellow.

Ob. I wonder if *Titania* be awak't;

Then what it was that next came in her eye,

Which she must dote on, in extremity.

Here comes my messenger: how now mad spirit,
What night-rule now about this haunted groue?

Puck. My mistresse with a monster is in loue,

Neere to her close and consecrated bower,

While she was in her dull and sleeping hower,

A crew of patches, rude Mechanicals,

That worke for bread, vpon *Athenian* stales,

Were met together to rehearse a play,

Intended for great *Theseus* nuptiall day:

The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort.

Who *Piramus* presented, in their sport,

Forfooke his Scene, and entred in a brake,

When I did him at this aduantage take,

An Asses nole I fixed on his head.

Anon his *Thisbie* must be answered,

And forth my Minnock comes: when they him spy,

As wilde geese, that the creeping Fowler eye,

Or ruffed pated choughes, many in sort

(Rising and cawing at the guns report)

Seuer themselues, and madly sweepe the sky:

So at his sight, a way his fellowes flye,

And at our stampe, here ore and ore one falles;

He murder cryes, and helpe from *Athen* calls.

Their sense thus weake, lost with their feares thus strong,

Made senselesse things begin to do them wrong.

For briars and thornes at their apparell snatch,

Some fleeces, some hats, from yeelders all things catch,

I led them on in this distracted feare,

And left sweete *Piramus* translated there:

When

A Midfommer nights Dreame

When in that moment (so it came to passe)

Tytania waked, and straightway lou'd an asse.

Ob. This fall'es out better then I could deuise :

But hast thou yet lacht the *Athenians* eyes,

With the loue iuyce, as I did bid thee do ?

Rob. I tooke him sleeping (that is finisht to)

And the *Athenian* woman by his side,

That when he wak't, of force she must be eyde.

Enter Demetrius and Hermia.

Ob. Stand close, this is the same *Athenian*.

Rob. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Deme. O why rebuke you him that loues you so ?

Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Her. Now I but chide, but I should vse thee worse.

For thou (I feare) hast giuen me cause to curse,

If thou hast slaine *Lysander* in his sleepe, (to,

Being ore shoos in blood, plunge in the deepe, and kill me

The Sunne was not so true vnto the day,

As he to me. Would he haue stollen away,

From sleeping *Hermia* ? Ile beleuee as soone

This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the Moone

May through the Center creepe, and so displease

Her brothers noonetide, with th' *Antipodes*.

It cannot be but thou hast murdred him,

So should a murderer looke, so dead, so grim.

Dem. So should the murdered looke, & so should I,

Pierst through the heart with your stearne cruelty :

Yet you the murderer looke as bright, as cleare,

As yonder *Venus* in her glimmering spheare.

Her. VVhat's this to my *Lysander* ? where is he ?

Ah good *Demetrius*, wilt thou giue him me ?

Dem. Ide rather giue his carkasse to my hounds.

Her. Out dog, out curre, thou driu'st me past the bonds

Of maidens patience. Hast thou slaine him then ?

Henceforth be neuer numbred among men.

Oh,

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

67 Oh, once tell true, euen for my sake,
 Durst thou haue lookt vpon him, being awake ?
 And hast thou kild him sleeping ? O braue tutch :
 Could not a worme, an Adder do so much ?
 71 An Adder did it. For with doubler tongue
 Then thine (thou serpent) neuer Adder stung.

Dem. You spend your passion on a mispriz'd mood,
 I am not guilty of *Lysanders* blood :
 75 Nor is he dead, for ought that I can tell.

Her. I pray thee tell me then, that he is well.

Dem. And if I could, what should I get therefore ?

Her. A priuiledge, neuer to see me more,
 And from thy hated presence part I, see me no more,
 79 Whether he be dead or no. *Exit.*

Dem. There is no following her in this fierce vaine,
 Heere therefore for a while I will remaine.
 83 So sorrowes heauinesse doth heauier grow.
 For debt that bankrout slip doth sorrow owe,
 Which now in some slight measure it will pay,
 If for his tender heere I make some stay. *Lie downe.*

87 *Ob.* What hast thou done ? Thou hast mistaken quite,
 And laide the loue iuyce on some true loues sight :
 Of thy misprision, must perforce ensue
 Some true loue turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

91 *Rob.* Then fate ore-rules, that one man holding troth,
 A million faile, confounding oath on oath.

Ob. About the wood, goe swifter then the winde,
 And *Helena* of *Athens* looke thou finde.
 95 All fancy sicke she is, and pale of cheere,
 With signes of loue, that costs the fresh blood deare.
 By some illusion see thou bring her heere,
 Ile charme his eies, against she do appeare.

99 *Robin.* I go, I go, looke how I goe,
 Swifter then arrow from the *Tartars* bowe. *Exit.*

Ob. Flower of this purple die,

E

Hit

A Midsommer nights Dreame.

Hit with *Cupids* archery,
 Sinke in apple of his eye,
 When his loue he doth espy,
 Let her shine as gloriously
 As the *Venus* of the sky.
 When thou wak'st, if she be by,
 Beg of her for remedy.

Enter Pucke.

Pucke, Captaine of our Fairy band,
Helena is heere at hand,
 And the youth, mistooke by me,
 Pleading for a Louers fee.
 Shall we their fond Pageant see?
 Lord, what fooles these mortals be!

Ob, Stand aside: the noyse they make,
 Will cause *Demetrius* to awake.

Puc. Then will two at once wooe one,
 That must needs be sport alone:
 And those things do best please me,
 That befall preposterously.

Enter Lysander and Helena.

Lys. Why should you think that I should wooe in scorn?
 Scorne and derision neuer come in teares:
 Looke when I vow I weepe; and vowes so borne,
 In their natiuity all truth appeares.
 How can these things in me, seeme scorne to you?
 Bearing the badge of faith to proue them true.

Hel. You do aduance your cunning more and more,
 When truth kills truth, O diuelish holy fray!
 These vowes are *Hermias*. Will you giue her ore?
 Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh.
 Your vowes to her, and me (put in two scales)
 Will euen weigh, and both as light as tales.

Lys. I had no iudgement, when to her I swore.

Hel. Nor none in my minde, now you giue her ore.

Lys.

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A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Lyf. Demetrius loues her, and he loues not you.

Deme. O *Helen*, goddesse, nimph, perfect, diuine,

To what, my loue, shall I compare thine eie !

Christall is muddy, O how ripe in shewe,

Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow !

That pure congealed white; high *Taurus* snow,

Fan'd with the Easterne winde, turnes to a crow,

When thou holdst vp thy hand. O let me kisse

This Princeesse of pure white, this seale of blisse.

Hell. O spight ! ô hell ! I see you all are bent

To set against me, for your merriment.

If you were ciuill, and knew curtesie,

You would not do me thus much iniury.

Can you not hate me, as I know you do,

But you must ioyne in soules to mocke me too ?

If you were men, as men you are in shew,

You would not vse a gentle Lady so ;

To vow, and sweare, and superpraise my parts,

When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.

You both are Riuals, and loue *Hermia* ;

And now both Riuals, to mocke *Helena*.

A trim exploit, a manly enterprize,

To coniure teares vp in a poore maides eyes,

With your derision, none of noble sort,

Would so offend a virgine, and extort

A poore soules patience, all to make you sport.

Lyfan. You are vnkinde *Demetrius* ; be not so.

For you loue *Hermia* ; this you know I know ;

And heere with all good will, with all my heart,

In *Hermias* loue I yeeld you vp my part ;

And yours of *Helena*, to me bequeath,

Whom I do loue, and will do to my death.

Hel. Neuer did mockers waste more idle breath.

Deme. *Lysander*, keepe thy *Hermia*, I will none :

If ere I lou'd her, all that loue is gone.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

My heart to her, but as guest-wife sojournd,
And now to *Helen* it is home return'd,
There to remaine.

Lys. It is not so.

Dem. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Least to thy perill thou abide it deare.
Looke where thy Loue comes, yonder is thy deare.

Enter Hermia.

Her. Darke night, that from the eye his function takes,
The eare more quicke of apprehension makes,
Wherein it doth impaire the seeing sense,
It paies the hearing double recompence.
Thou art not by mine eie, *Lysander* found,
Mine eare (I thanke it) brought me to thy sound.
But why vnkindly didst thou leaue me so?

Lys. Why should he stay, whom loue doth presse to go?

Her. What loue could presse *Lysander* from my side?

Lys. *Lysanders* loue (that would not let him bide)
Faire *Helena*; who more engilds the night,
Then all yon fiery oes, and eies of light.
Why seek'st thou me? Could not this make thee know,
The hate I bare thee, made me leaue thee so?

Her. You speake not as you thinke; it cannot be.

Hel. Loe, she is one of this confederacy,
Now I perceiue, they haue conioynd all three,
To fashion this false sport, in sight of me.
Iniurious *Hermia*, most vngratefull maide,
Haue you conspir'd, haue you with these contriu'd
To baite me, with this foule derision?
Is all the counsell that we two haue shar'd,
The sisters vowes, the houres that we haue spent,
When we haue chid the hasty footed time,
For parting vs; O, is all forgot?
All schoole-daies friendship, child-hood innocence?
We *Hermia*, like two artificiall gods,

Haue

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A Midfommer nights Dreame.

204 Haue with our needles, created both one flower,
 Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
 Both warbling of one song, both in one key;
 As if our hands, our fides, voices, and mindes
 208 Had bin incorporate. So we grew together,
 Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
 But yet an vnion in partition,
 Two louely berries moulded on one stemme,
 212 So with two seeming bodies, but one heart,
 Two of the first life coats in Heraldry,
 Due but to one, and crowned with one crest.
 And will you rent our ancient loue afunder,
 216 To ioyne with men in scorning your poore friend ?
 It is not friendly, tis not maidenly.
 Our sexe as well as I, may chide you for it,
 Though I alone do feele the iniury.

220 *Her.* I am amazed at your words,
 I scorne you not; It seemes that you scorne me.

224 *Hel.* Haue you not set *Lysander*, as in scorne
 To follow me, and praise my eies and face ?
 And made your other Loue, *Demetrius*
 (Who euen but now did spurne me with his foote)
 To call me goddesse, nimph, diuine, and rare,
 228 Precious, celestiall ? Wherefore speakes he this
 To her he hates ? And wherefore doth *Lysander*.
 Deny your loue (so rich within his soule)
 And tender me (forsooth) affection,
 But by your setting on, by your consent ?
 232 What though I be not so in grace as you,
 So hung vpon with loue, so fortunate ?
 (But miserable most, to loue vn lou'd)
 This you should pittie, rather then despise.

236 *Her.* I vnderstand not what you meane by this.

Hel. I, do, perseuer, counterfeit sad lookes,
 Make mouthes vpon me when I turne my backe,

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Winke each at other, hold the sweete ieast vp :

This sport well carried, shall be chronicled.

If you haue any pittie, grace, or manners,

You would not make me such an argument.

But faryewell, tis partly mine owne fault,

VVhich death or absence soone shall remedy.

Lys. Stay gentle *Helena*, heare my excuse,

My loue, my life, my soule, faire *Helena*,

Hel. O excellent !

Her. Sweete, do not scorne her so.

Dem. If she cannot entreate, I can compell.

Lys. Thou canst compell, no more then she entreate.

Thy threats haue no more strength then her weake praise.

Helen. I loue thee, by my life I doe ;

I sweare by that which I will lose for thee,

To proue him false, that saies I loue thee not.

Dem. I say, I loue thee more then he can do.

Lys. If thou say so, with-draw and proue it to.

Dem. Quick, come.

Her. *Lysander*, wherero tends all this ?

Lys. Away, you *Ethiops*.

Dem. No, no, hee'l seeme to breake loose ;

Take on as you would follow,

But yet come not : you are a tame man, go.

Lys. Hang off thou cat, thou bur ; vile thing let loose,

Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent.

Her. VVhy are you growne so rude ?

VVhat change is this, sweete Loue ?

Lys. Thy loue ? out tawny *Tartar*, out ;

Our loathed medicine ; ô hated poison hence.

Her. Do you not ieast ?

Hel. Yes sooth, and so do you.

Lys. *Demetrius*, I will keepe my word with thee.

Dem. I would I had your bond : for I perceiue,
A weake bond holds you ; Ile not trust your word.

Lys.

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A Midsummer nights Dreame.

274 *Lys.* VVhat, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead ?
Although I hate her Ile not harme her so.

Her. VVhat ? can you do me greater harme then hate ?
Hate me, wherefore ? O me, what newes my Loue ?

278 Am not I *Hermia* ? Are not you *Lyfander* ?

I am as faire now, as I was ere while.

Since night you lou'd me ; yet since night you left me.

VVhy then you left me (ô the gods forbid)

282 In earnest, shall I say ?

Lys. I, by my life ;

And neuer did desire to see thee more.

Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt ;

286 Be certaine ; nothing truer ; tis no ieast,

That I do hate thee, and loue *Helena*.

Her. O me, you iuggler, you canker blossome,

You theefe of loue ; what, haue you come by night,

290 And stolne my lous heart from him ?

Hel. Fine ifaith.

Haue you no modesty, no maiden shame,

No touch of bashfulnesse ? VVhat, will you teare

294 Impatient answers from my gentle tongue ?

Fie, fie, you counterfet, you puppet, you.

Her. Puppet ? why so ? I, that way goes the game.

Now I perceiue that she hath made compare

298 Betweene our statures, she hath vrg'd her height,

And with her personage, her tall parsonage,

Her height (forsooth) she hath preuaild with him.

And are you growne so high in his esteeme,

302 Because I am so dwarfish and so low ?

How low am I, thou painted May-pole ? Speake,

How low am I ? I am not yet so low,

But that my nailes can reach vnto thine eyes.

306 *Hel.* I pray you though you mocke me, gentlemen,

Let her not hurr me ; I was neuer curst :

I haue no gift at all in shrewishnesse :

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

I am a right maid for my cowardize ;
 Let her not strike me : you perhaps may thinke,
 Because she is something lower then my selfe,
 That I can match her.

Her. Lower ? harke againe.

Hel. Good *Hermia*, do not be so bitter with me,
 I euermore did loue you *Hermia*,
 Did euer keepe your counsels, neuer wronged you,
 Saue that in loue vnto *Demetrius*,
 I told him of your stealth vnto this wood.
 He followed you, for loue I followed him,
 But he hath chid me hence, and threatned me
 To strike me, spurne me, nay to kill me to ;
 And now, so you will let me quiet goe,
 To *Athens* will I beare my folly backe,
 And follow you no further, Let me go.
 You see how simple, and how fond I am.

Her. Why get you gone : who ist that hinders you ?

Hel. A foolish heart, that I leaue heere behinde.

Her. VVhat, with *Lyfander* ?

Hel. VVith *Demetrius*.

Lyf. Be not afraid, she shall not harme thee *Helena*.

Dem. No sir, she shall not, though you take her part.

Hel. O when shee's angry, she is keene and shrewd,
 She was a vixen when she went to schoole,
 And though she be but little, she is fierce.

Her. Little againe ? Nothing but low and little ?

VVhy will you suffer her to flout me thus ?

Let me come to her.

Lyf. Get you gone you dwarfe,
 You *minimus*, of hindring knot grasse made,
 You bead, you acorne.

Dem. You are too officious,
 In her behalfe that scornes your seruices.
 Let her alone, speake not of *Helena*,

Take

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A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Take not her part, For if thou dost intend
Neuer so little shew of loue to her,
Thou shalt abie it.

Lys Now she holds me not,
Now follow if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in *Helena*. (Exit.

Dem. Follow? Nay, Ile go with thee cheeke by iowle.

Her. You Mistresse, all this coyle is long of you.
Nay, goe not backe.

Hel. I will not trust you I,
Not longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine, are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer though to runne away.

Her. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. Exeunt,

Ob. This is thy negligence, still thou mistak'st,
Or else commit'st thy knaueries wilfully.

Puck. Beleeue me, King of shaddowes, I mistooke.
Did not you tell me, I should know the man,
By the *Athenian* garments he hath on?
And so farre blamelesse proues my enterprize,
That I haue nointed an Athenians eyes,
And so farre am I glad, it so did sort,
As this their iangling I esteeme a sport.

Ob. Thou seest these Louers seeke a place to fight,
Hie therefore *Robin*, ouercast the night,
The starry Welkin couer thou anon,
With drooping fogge as blacke as *Acheron*,
And leade these testy Riuals so astray,
As one come not within anothers way.
Like to *Lysander*, sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stirre *Demetrius* vp with bitter wrong;
And sometime raile thou like *Demetrius*;
And from each other looke thou leade them thus,
Till ore their browes, death-counterfeiting, sleepe
With leaden ledgs, and Batty wings doth creepe;

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Then

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Then crush this hearbe into *Lyfanders* eie,
 Whose liquor hath this vertuous property,
 To take from thence all error, with his might,
 And make his eie-bals rolle with wonted sight.
 When they next wake, all this derision
 Shall seeme a dreame, and fruitlesse vision,
 And backe to *Athens* shall the Louers wend
 With league, whose date till death shall neuer end.
 Whiles I in this affaire do thee apply,
 Ile to my Queene, and beg her *Indian* boy ;
 And then I will her charmed eie release
 From monsters view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck, My Fairie Lord, this must be done with haste,
 For night swift Dragons cut the Clouds full fast,
 And yonder shines *Auroras* harbinger ;
 At whose approach, Ghosts wandring heere and there,
 Troope home to Church-yards ; damned spirits all,
 That in crosse waies and fouds haue buriall,
 Already to their wormy beds are gone ;
 For feare least day should looke their shames vpon,
 They wilfully themselues exile from light,
 And must for aie comfort with blacke browd night.

Ob. But we are spirits of another sort :
 I, with the mornings loue haue oft made sport,
 And like a Forrester, the groues may tread,
 Euen till the Easterne gate all fiery red,
 Opening on *Neptune*, with faire blessed beames,
 Turnes into yellow gold, his salt greene streames.
 But notwithstanding haste, make no delay,
 We may effect this businesse, yet ere day.

Puck, Vp and downe, vp and downe, I will leade them vp
 & downe : I am seard in field and towne, *Goblin*, lead them
 vp and downe : here comes one. *Enter Lyfander*.

Lyf. Where art thou, proud *Demetrius* ? Speak thou now.

Rob. Here villaine, drawne and ready. Where art thou ?

Lyf.

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A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Lyf. I will be with thee straight.

Rob. Follow me then to plainer ground.

Enter Demetrius.

Deme. *Lyfander*, speake againe;

Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?

Speake in some bush. Where dost thou hide thy head?

Rob. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,

Telling the bushes that thou look'st for warres,

And wilt not come? Come recreant, come thou childe,

Ile whip thee with a rod. He is defil'd

That drawes a sword on thee.

Deme. Yea, art thou there?

Ro. Follow my voice, wee'l try no manhood here. *Exeunt.*

Lyf. He goes before me, and still dares me on,

When I come where he calles, then hee's gone.

The villaine is much lighter heel'd then I;

I followed fast, but faster he did flie;

That fallen am I in darke vneuen way,

And here will rest me. Come thou gentle day:

For if but once thou shew me thy gray light,

Ile finde *Demetrius*, and reuenge this spight.

Robin and Demetrius.

Rob. Ho, ho, ho; coward, why com'st thou not?

Deme. Abide me, if thou dar'st. For well I wot,

Thou runst before me, shifting euery place,

And dar'st not stand, nor looke me in the face.

Where art thou?

Rob. Come hither, I am here.

De. Nay then thou mockst me; thou shalt buy this deare,

If euer I thy face by day-light see.

Now goe thy way: faintnesse constraineth me,

To measure out my length on this cold bed,

By daies approach looke to be visited.

Enter Helena.

Hel. O weary night, ô long and tedious night,

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Abate

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Abate thy houres, shine comforts from the east,
That I may backe to *Athens* by day-light,
From these that my poore company detest;
And sleepe that sometimes shuts vp sorrowes eie,
Steale me a while from mine owne company.

Sleepe.

Rob. Yet but three? Come one more,
Two of both kindes makes vp foure.
Here she comes, curst and sad,

Cupid is a knauish lad,

Enter Hermia.

Thus to make poore females mad.

Her. Neuer so weary, neuer so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew, and torne with briars,
I can no further crawle, no further goe;
My legs can keepe no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the breake of day,
Heauens shield *Lysander*, if they meane a fray.

Rob. On the ground sleepe sound,
He apply your eye gentler loue, remedy.
When thou wak'st, thou tak'st

True delight in the sight of thy former Ladies eie,
And the Country Prouerbe knowne,
That euery man should take his owne,
In your waking shall be showne.

Iacke shall haue *Iill*, nought shall go ill,

The man shall haue his Mare againe, and all shall be well.

*Enter Queene of Fairies, and Clowne, and Fairies, and the
King behinde them.*

Tita. Come sit thee downe vpon this flowry bed,
While I thy amiable cheekes do coy,
And sticke muske roses in thy sleeke smoothe head,
And kisse thy faire large eares, my gentle ioy.

Clowne. Where's *Pease-blossome*?

Peas. Ready.

Clowne. Scratch my head, *Pease-blossome*. Wher's *Moun-
sieur Cobweb*?

Cob. Ready.

Clowne.

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A Midfommers nights Dreame.

9 *Clo.* Mounſieur *Cobweb*, good Mounſieur get your wea-
pons in your hand, and kill me a red hipt humble-bee, on
the top of a thistle; and good Mounſieur bring me the ho-
ny bag. Doe not fret your ſelfe too much in the action,
13 Mounſieur; and good Mounſieur haue a care the hony bag
breake not, I would be loth to haue you ouerflowne with a
hony-bag ſignior. Where's Mounſieur *Muſtardſeed*?

Muſ. Ready.

17 *Clo.* Giue me your neafe, Mounſieur *Muſtardſeed*.
Pray you leaue your courteſie, good Mounſieur.

Muſ. What's your wil?

21 *Clo.* Nothing good Mounſieur, but to helpe Cauallery
Cobweb to ſcratch. I muſt to the Barbers Mounſieur, for
me-thinkes I am maruailous hairy about the face. And I
am ſuch a tender aſſe, if my haire do but tickle me, I muſt
ſcratch.

25 *Tita.* What, wilt thou heare ſome ſome muſick, my ſweet
loue?

Clowne. I haue a reaſonable good eare in muſicke. Let vs
haue the tongs and the bones.

29 *Tita.* Or ſay ſweete Loue, what thou deſireſt to eate.

Clow. Truly a pecke of prouender; I could mounch your
good dry Oates. Me-thinkes I haue a great deſire to a bot-
tle of hay: good hay, ſweete hay hath no fellow.

33 *Tita.* I haue a venturous Fairy,
That ſhall ſeek the ſquirrels hoard,
And fetch thee new Nuts.

37 *Clo.* I had rather haue a handfull or two of dried peafe.
But I pray you let none of your people ſtir me, I haue an ex-
poſition of ſleepe come vpon me.

41 *Tita.* Sleepe thou, and I will winde thee in my armes,
Fairies be gone, and be alwaies away.
So doth the woodbine, the ſweete Honifuckle,
Gently entwiſt; the female Iuy ſo
Enrings the barky fingers of the Elme.

A Midlommer nights Dreame.

O how I loue thee ! how I dote on thee !

Enter Robin goodfellow.

Ob. Welcome good *Robin* : seest thou this sweet fight ?
 Her dotage now I do begin to pittie.
 For meeting her of late behinde the wood,
 Seeking sweete sauors for this hatefull foole,
 I did vpbraid her, and fall out with her,
 For she his hairy temples then had rounded,
 With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers.
 And that same dew which somtime on the buds,
 Vvas wont to swell like round & orient pearles ;
 Stood now within the pretty flouriets eies,
 Like teares that did their owne disgrace bewaile.
 When I had at my pleasure taunted her,
 And she in milde tearmes begd my patience,
 I then did aske of her, her changeling childe,
 Which straight she gaue me, and her Fairy sent
 To beare him to my Bower in Fairy Land.
 And now I haue the boy, I will vndoe
 This hatefull imperfection of her eies.
 And gentle *Pucke*, take this transformed scalpe,
 From off the head of this *Athenian* swaine ;
 That he awaking when the other do,
 May all to *Athens* backe againe repaire,
 And thinke no more of this nights accidents,
 But as the fierce vexation of a dreame.
 But first I will release the Fairy Queene.

Be as thou wast wont to be ;

See as thou wast wont to see.

Dians bud, or Cupids flower,

Haue such force and blessed power.

Now my *Titania* wake you, my sweete Queene.

Tita. My *Oberon*, what visions haue I scene !

Me-thought I was enamored of an Ass.

Ob. There lies your loue.

Tita.

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A Midfommers nights Dreame.

78 *Tita.* How came these things to passe?
Oh, how mine eies doth loathe this visage now!

Ob. Silence a while. *Robin* take of this head;

82 *Titania*, musicke call, and strike more dead

Then common sleepe; of all these, fine the sence.

Tita. Musicke, ho musicke, such as charmeth sleepe.

Rob. When thou wak'st, with thine owne fooles eies peep.

86 *Ob.* Sound musick; come my *Queen*, take hands with me
And rocke the ground whereon these sleepers be.

Now thou and I are new in amity,

And will to morrow midnight, solemnly

90 Dance in Duke *Theseus* house triumphantly,

And blesse it to all faire posterity.

There shall the paires of faithfull Louers be

VVedded, with *Theseus*, all in iollity.

Rob. Fairy King, attend and marke,

94 I do heare the morning Larke.

Ob. Then my *Queene* in silence sad,

Trip we after the nights shade;

VVe the Globe can compasse soone,

98 Swifter then the wandring Moone.

Tita. Come my Lord, and in our flight.

Tell me how it came this night,

That I sleeping heere was found,

102 VVith these mortals on the ground.

Exeunt.

Enter Theseus and all his traine.

Winde hornes.

Thes. Goe one of you, finde out the Forrester,

For now our obseruation is perform'd;

And since we haue the vaward of the day,

106 My Loue shall heare the musicke of my hounds.

Vncouple in the VVeesterne valley, let them go;

Dispatch I say, and finde the Forrester,

VVe will faire *Queene*, vp to the Mountaines top,

110 And marke the musicall confusion

Of hounds and eccho in coniunction.

Hippo.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Hip. I was with *Hercules* and *Cadmus* once,
When in a wood of *Creete* they bayed the Beare
With hounds of *Sparta*; neuer did I heare
Such gallant chiding. For besides the groues,
The skies, the fountaines, euery region neere,
Seeme all one mutuall cry. I neuer heard
So musically a discord, such sweete thunder.

Thes. My hounds are bred out of the *Spartan* kinde,
So flew'd, so fanded, and their heads are hung
With eares that sweepe away the morning dew,
Crooke kneed, and dew-lapt, like *Theſſalian* Bulls,
Slow in pursuite, but matcht in mouth like bells,
Each vnder each. A cry more tuneable
Was neuer hollowd to, nor cheer'd with horne,
In *Creete*, in *Sparta*, nor in *Theſſaly*;
Iudge when you heare. But soft, what nimphs are these?

Egeus. My Lord, this is my daughter heere asleepe,
And this *Lyſander*, this *Demetrius* is,
This *Helena*, olde *Nedars Helena*,
I wonder of this being heere together.

The. No doubt they rose vp early, to obserue
The right of May; and hearing our intent,
Came heere in grace of our solemnity.
But speake *Egeus*, is not this the day
That *Hermia* should giue answer of her choyse?

Egeus. It is, my Lord.

Th. Go bid the huntsmen wake them with their hornes.

Shout within, they all start vp. Winde hornes.

Thes. Good morrow friends: Saint *Valentine* is past,
Begin these wood birds but to couple now?

Lys. Pardon, my Lord.

Thes. I pray you all stand vp.
I know you two are Riual enemies.
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so farre from iealousie,

To

A Midfommer nights Dream e.

To sleepe by hate, and feare no enmity.

Lys. My Lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Halfe sleepe, halfe waking. But as yer, I sweare,
I cannot truely say how I came here.

But as I thinke (for truely would I speake)
And now I do bethinke me, so it is;

I came with *Hermia* hither. Our intent
Was to be gone from *Athens*, where we might be
Without the perill of the *Athenian* Law.

Ege. Enough, enough my Lord : you haue enough ;
I beg the Law, the Law, vpon his head :
They would haue stolne away, they would, *Demetrius*,
Thereby to haue defeated you and me :
You of your wife, and me of my consent ;
Of my consent, that she should be your wife.

Dem. My Lord, faire *Helen* told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither, to this wood,
And I in fury hither followed them ;
Faire *Helena*, in fancy followed me.
But my good Lord, I wot not by what power
(But by some power it is) my loue
To *Hermia* (melted as the snow)
Seemes to me now as the remembrance of an idle gaude,
Which in my childehood I did dote vpon :
And all the faith, the vertue of my heart,
The obiect and the pleasure of mine eie,
Is onely *Helena*. To her, my Lord,
Was I bethroth'd, ere I see *Hermia*,
But like a sicknesse, did I loathe this food,
But as in health, come to my naturall taste,
Now do I wish it, loue it, long for it,
And will for euermore be true to it.

Thes. Faire Louers, you are fortunately met ;
Of this discourse, we will heare more anon.
Egeus, I will ouerbear your will ;

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For

A Midsommer nights Dreame.

For in the Temple, by and by with vs,
 These couples shall eternally be knit.
 And for the morning now is something worne,
 Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.
 Away, with vs to *Athens*; three and three,
 Wee'l hold a feast in great solemnity.

Come *Hippolita*.

Exit.

Deme. These things seeme small and vndistinguishable,
 Like farre off mountaines turned into Clouds.

Her. Me-thinks I see these things with parted eie,
 When euery thing seemes double.

Hel. So me-thinkes :

And I haue found *Demetrius*, like a iewell,
 Mine owne, and not mine owne,

Dem. Are you sure
 That we are awake ? It seemes to me,
 That yet we sleepe, we dreame. Do not you thinke,
 The Duke was heere, and bid vs follow him ?

Her. Yea, and my Father.

Hel. And *Hippolita*.

Lys. And he bid vs follow to the Temple.

Dem. Why then we are awake ; let's follow him, and by
 the way let vs recount our dreames. *Exit.*

Clo. When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer. My
 next is, most faire *Piramus*. Hey ho. *Peter Quince* ? *Flute* the
 bellows-mender ? *Snout* the tinker ? *Starveling* ? Gods my
 life ! Stolne hence, and left me asleepe : I haue had a most
 rare vision. I haue had a dreame, past the wit of man, to say,
 what dreame it was. Man is but an Ass, if he go about to
 expound this dreame. Me-thought I was, there is no man
 can tell what. Me-thought I was, and me-thought I had.
 But man is but patcht a foole, if he will offer to say, what
 me-thought I had. The eie of man hath not heard, the eare
 of man hath not seene, mans hand is not able to taste, his
 tongue to conceiue, nor his heart to report, what my dream
 was.

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IV. i.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

was. I will get *Peter Quince* to write a Ballet of this dream,
 it shall be call'd *Bottomes Dreame*, because it hath no bot-
 tome; and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before
 the Duke. Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I
 shall sing it at her death, *Exit.*

IV. ii.

Enter Quince, Flute, Thisbie, and the rabble.

Quin. Haue you sent to *Bottomes* house? Is he come home yet?

Flute. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt hee is transported.

This. If he come not, then the play is mard. It goes not forward, doth it?

Quin. It is not possible; you haue not a man in all *Athens*, able to discharge *Piramus* but he.

This. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handy-craft man in *Athens*.

Quin. Yea, and the best person too, and he is a very Paramour, for a sweete voyce.

This. You must say, Paragon. A Paramour is (God blesse vs) a thing of nought.

Enter Snug the Ioyner.

Snug. Masters, the Duke is comming from the Temple, and there is two or three Lords and Ladies more married. If our sport had gone forward, we had all beene made men.

This. O sweete bully *Bottom*: thus hath he lost sixpence a day, during his life; he could not haue scaped sixpence a day. And the Duke had not giuen him sixpence a day for playing *Piramus*, Ile be hang'd. He would haue deserued it, Sixpence a day in *Piramus*, or nothing.

Enter Bottom.

Bot. Where are these Lads? Where are these hearts?

Quin. *Bottom*, o most courageous day! O most happy houre!

G 2

Bot.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Bot. Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but aske mee not what. For if I tell you, I am not true *Athenian*. I will tel you euery thing right as it fell our.

Quin. Let vs heare, sweete *Bottom*.

Bot. Not a word of me: all that I will tell you, is, that the Duke hath dined. Get your apparell together, good strings to your beards, new ribbands to your pumps, meete presently at the Palace, euerie man looke ore his part: for the short and the long is, our play is preferd. In any case let *Thibby* haue cleane linnen: and let not him that plaies the Lion, paire his nailes, for they shall hang out for the Lions claws. And most deare Actors, eate no Onions, nor Garlick; for we are to vtter sweete breath, and I do not doubt but to heare them say, it is a sweete Comedy. No more words: away, go away.

Enter Theseus, Hippolita, and Philostrate.

V.i.

Hip. Tis strange my *Theseus*, that these louers speake of.

The. More strange then true. I neuer may beleue These anticke fables, nor these Fairy toies, Louers and mad men haue such seething braines, Such shaping phantasies, that apprehend more Then coole reason euer comprehends. The Lunaticke, the Louer, and the Poet, Are of imagination all compact. One sees more diuels then vaste hell can hold; That is the mad man. The Louer, all as franticke, Sees *Helens* beauty in a brow of *Egypt*. The Poets eie in a fine frenzy rolling, doth glance From heauen to earth, from earth to heauen. And as imagination bodies forth the formes of things Vknowne; the Poets pen turnes them to shapes, And giues to airy nothing, a locall habitation, And a name. Such trickes hath strong imagination,

That

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

18 That if it would but apprehend some ioy,
It comprehends some bringer of that ioy.
Or in the night, imagining some feare,
How easie is a bush suppos'd a Beare?

22 *Hip.* But all the story of the night told ouer,
And all their mindes transfigur'd so together,
More witnesse than fancies images,
And growes to something of great constancy;
26 But how focuer, strange and admirable.

Enter louers : Lyfander, Demetrius, Hermia, and Helena.

Thes. Here come the louers, full of ioy and mirth:
Ioy, gentle friends, ioy and fresh daies
Of loue accompany your hearts.

30 *Lys.* More then to vs, waite in your roiall walkes, your
boord, your bed.

Thes. Come now, what maskes, what dances shall wee
haue,

34 To weare away this long age of three houres,
Betweene or after supper, and bed-time?
Where is our vsuall manager of mirth?
What Reuels are in hand? Is there no play,
38 To ease the anguish of a torturing houre?
Call *Philostrate*.

Philo. Heere mighty *Theseus*.

Thes. Say, what abridgment haue you for this euening?
42 What maske, what musicke? how shall we beguile
The lazie time, if not with some delight?

Phil. There is a brieft, how many sports are rife.
Make choise of which your Highnesse will see first.

46 *Thes.* The battell with the *Centaur*s to be sung
By an *Athenian* Eunuch, to the Harpe.
Wee'l none of that. That haue I tolde my Loue,
In glory of my kinsman *Hercules*.
50 The riot of the tipple *Bachanals*,

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Tearing the *Thracian* finger, in their rage ?
 That is an olde deuice ; and it was plaid,
 When I from *Thebes* came last a Conqueror.
 The thrice three Muses, mourning for the death
 Of learning, late deceast in beggery.
 That is some *Satire* keene and criticall,
 Not sorting with a nuptiall ceremony.
 A tedious brieft Scene of young *Piramus*,
 And his Loue *Thisby* ; very tragicall mirth ?
 Merry and tragicall ? Tedious and brieft ? That is hot Ice,
 And wondrous strange Snow. How shall we finde the con-
 cord of this discord ?

Philo. A play there is, my Lord, some ten words long,
 Which is as brieft, as I haue knowne a play ;
 But by ten words, my Lord, it is too long ;
 Which makes it tedious. For in all the play,
 There is not one word apt, one plaier fitt.
 And tragicall, my noble Lord, it is : for *Piramus*
 Therein doth kill himselfe. Which when I saw
 Rehearst, I must confesse, made mine eyes water ;
 But more merry teares the passion of loud laughter
 Neuer shed.

Thef. What are they that do play it ?

Philo. Hard handed men, that worke in *Athens* here,
 Which neuer labour'd in their mindes till now ;
 And now haue toyed their vnbreathed memories,
 With this same play, against your nuptiall.

Thef. And we will heare it.

Phi. No, my noble Lord, it is not for you. I haue heard
 It ouer, and it is nothing, nothing in the world ;
 Vnlesse you can finde sport in their intents,
 Extremely stretcht, and cond with cruell paine,
 To do you seruice.

Thef. I will heare that play. For neuer any thing
 Can be amisse, when simplenesse and duty tender it.

Goe

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

86 Goe bring them in, and take your places, Ladies.

Hip. I loue not to see wretchednesse orecharged;
And duty in his seruice perishing.

Thes. Why gentle sweete, you shall see no such thing.

90 *Hip.* He saies, they can do nothing in this kinde.

The. The kinder we, to giue them thanks for nothing.

Our sport shall be, to take what they mistake :

And what poore duty cannot do, noble respect

84 Takes it in might, not merit.

Where I haue come, great Clearkes haue purposed

To greete me with premeditated welcomes ;

98 Where I haue seene them shiuer and looke pale,

Make periods in the midst of sentences,

Throttle their practiz'd accent in their feares,

And in conclusion, dumbly haue broke off,

Not paying me a welcome, Trust me sweete,

102 Out of this silence yet, I pickt a welcome :

And in the modesty of fearefull duty,

I read as much, as from the ratling tongue

Of fauzy and audacious eloquence.

106 Loue therefore, and tongue-tide simplicity,

In least, speake most, to my capacity.

Philo. So please your Grace, the Prologue is addrest.

Duke. Let him approach.

Enter the Prologue.

110 *Pro.* If we offend, it is with our good will.

That you should thinke, we come not to offend,

But with good will. To shew our simple skill,

That is the true beginning of our end.

114 Consider then, we come but in despight.

VVe do not come, as minding to content you,

Our true intent is. All for your delight,

VVe are not heere. That you should here repent you,

118 The A&tors are at hand ; and by their show,

You shall know all, that you are like to know.

Thes.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

Thes. This fellow doth not stand vpon points.

Lys. He hath rid his Prologue, like a rough Colt: hee knowes not the stop. A good morall my Lord. It is not enough to speake, but to speake true.

Hip. Indeed he hath plaid on this Prologue, like a childe on a Recorder, a sound, but not in gouernment.

Thes. His speech was like a tangled chaine; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter Pyramus and Thisby, Wall, Moone-shine, and Lyon.

Prologue. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show,
But wonder on, till truth make all things plaine.

This man is *Pyramus*, if you would know;

This beautilous Lady, *Thisby* is certaine.

This man with lyme and roughcast, doth present

Wall, that vile wall, which did these louers sunder:

And through wals chinke (poore soules) they are content
To whisper. At the which, let no man wonder.

This man, with Lanthorne, dog, and bush of thorne,

Presenteth moone-shine. For if you will know,

By moone-shine did these Louers thinke no scorne

To meete at *Ninus* toombe, there, there to wooe:

This grizly beast (which Lyon hight by name)

The trusty *Thisby*, comming first by night,

Did scarre away, or rather did affright:

And as she fled, her mantle she did fall;

Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did staine.

Anon comes *Pyramus*, sweete youth and tall,

And findes his trusty *Thisbies* Mantle staine;

Whereat, with blade, with bloody blamefull blade,

He brauely broacht his boiling bloody breast,

And *Thisby*, tarrying in Mulberry shade,

His dagger drew, and died. For all the rest,

Let *Lyon*, *Moone-shine*, *Wall*, and Louers twaine,

At large discourse, while here they do remaine.

Thes.

A Midsummer nights Dreame.

153 *Thes.* I wonder if the Lyon be to speake.

Deme. No wonder, my Lord: one Lion may when many
Asses do.

Exit Lyon, Thisby, and Moone-shine.

157 *Wall.* In this same Interlude it doth befall,

That I, one *Flute* (by name) present a wall:
And such a wall, as I would haue you thinke,
That had in it a crannied hole or chinke:

161 Through which the Louers, *Piramus* and *Thisby*,
Did whisper often, very secretly.

This lome, this roughcast, and this stone doth show.

That I am that same wall; the truth is so.

And this the cranny is, right and sinister,

165 Through which the fearefull Louers are to whisper.

Thes. Would you desire lime and haire to speak better?

Deme. It is the wittiest partition, that euer I heard dis-
course, my Lord.

169 *Thes.* *Piramus* drawes neere the wall, silence.

Pir. O grim lookt night, ô night with hue so blacke,

O night, which euer art, when day is not:

O night, ô night, alacke, alacke, alacke,

173 I feare my *Thisbies* promise is forgot.

And thou ô wall, ô sweete, ô louely wall,

That stands betweene her Fathers ground and mine,

Thou wall, ô wall, ô sweete and louely wall,

177 Shew me thy chinke, to blink through with mine eie.

Thanks courteous wall. *Ioue* shield thee well for this.

But what see I? No *Thisby* do I see.

O wicked wall, through whom I see no blisse,

181 Curst be thy stones, for thus deceiuing me.

Thes. The wall me-thinks being sensible, should curse a-
gaine.

185 *Pir.* No in truth sir, he should not. *Deceiuing me*,
Is *Thisbies* cue; she is to enter now, and I am to spy
Her through the wall. You shall see it will fall

H

Pat

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Pat as I told you ; yonder she comes. *Enter Thisbie.*

This. O wall, full often hast thou heard my mones,
For parting my faire *Piramus*, and me.

My cherry lips haue often kist thy stones ;
Thy stones with lime and haire knit now againe.

Pyr. I see a voice ; now will I to the chinke,
To spy and I can heare my *Thisbies* face. *Thisby?*

This. My Loue thou arr, my Loue I thinke.

Pyr. Thinke what thou wilt, I am thy Louers grace,
And like *Limander*, am I trusty still.

This. And I like *Helen*, till the fates me kill.

Pir. Not *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, was so true.

This. As *Shafalus* to *Procrus*, I to you.

Pir. O kisse me through the hole of this vile wall.

This. I kisse the wals hole, not your lips at all.

Pir. Wilt thou at *Ninnies* toomb meete me straightway?

This. Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.

Wall. Thus haue I *Wall*, my part discharged so ;
And being done, thus *Wall* away doth goe.

Du. Now is the Moon vsed betweene the two neighbors.

Deme. No remedy, my Lord, when wals are so wilfull, to
heare without warning.

Dutch. This is the silliest stufte that ere I heard.

Duke. The best in this kinde are but shadowes, and the
worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Dutch. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

Duke. If wee imagine no worse of them then they of them-
selues, they may passe for excellent men. Heere come two
noble beasts, in a man and a Lyon.

Enter Lyon and Moone-shine.

Lyon. You Ladies, you (whose gentle hearts do feare
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floore)
May now perchance, both quake and tremble heere,
When Lyon rough, in wildest rage doth roare.
Then know that I, as *Snug* the ioyner am

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

221 A Lyon fell,nor else no Lyons damme,
For if I should,as Lyon come in strife,
Into this place,t'were pittie on my life.

Duke. A very gentle beast,and of a good conscience.

225 *Deme.* The very best at a beast,my Lord,that ere I saw.

Lys. This Lyon is a very Fox for his valour.

Duke. True,and a Goose for his discretion.

229 *De.* Not so my Lord.For his valour cannot carry his discretion;
and the Fox carries the goose.

Duke. His discretion I am sure cannot carry his valour.
For the Goose carries not the Fox.It is well; leaue it to his
discretion,and let vs hearken to the Moone.

233 *Moon.* This lanthorne doth the horned Moone present.

Deme. He should haue worne the hornes on his head.

Duke. He is no crescent,and his hornes are inuisible, within
the circumference.

237 *Moone.* This lanthorne doth the horned Moone present,
My selfe,the man ith'Moone do seeme to be.

241 *Duke.* This is the greatest error of all the rest; the man
should be put into the Lanthorne. How is it else the man
i'th Moone?

Dem. He dares not come there for the candle,
For you see,it is already in snuffe. (change.

Dutch. I am weary of this Moone; would he would

245 *Duke.* It appeares by his small light of discretion, that hee
is in the wane: but yet in curtesie,in all reason,we must stay
the time.

Lysand. Proceed Moone.

249 *Moone.* All that I haue to say,is to tell you,that the Lan-
thorne is the Moone; I,the man in the Moone, this thorne
bush,my thorne bush,and this dog,my dog.

253 *Deme.* Why all these should bee in the Lanthorne: for
they are in the Moone.But silence,heere comes *Thisby*.

Enter Thisby.

T'h. This is old *Ninies* toomb: wher's my loue? *Lyon.* Oh

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Dem.

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Dem. Well roard Lyon.

Duke. Well runne *Thisbie*.

Dutch. Well shone *Moone*. Truly the *Moone* shines
with a good grace.

Duke. Well mouz'd *Lyon*.

Dem. And then came *Piramus*.

Lys. And so the *Lyon* vanisht.

Enter Piramus.

Pyr. Sweete *Moone*, I thank thee for thy sunny beames,
I thanke thee *Moone*, for shining now so bright.

For by thy gracious, golden, glittering beames,

I trust to take of truest *Thisbie* sight.

But stay : ô spight ! but marke, poore knight,

What dreadfull dole is here ?

Eyes do you see ! how can it be !

O dainty ducke, ô deare !

Thy mantle good, what staind with blood ?

Approach ye *Furies* fell,

O fates come, come, cut thred and thrum,

Quaile, crush, conclude, and quell.

Duke. This passion, and the death of a deare friend would
goe neere to make a man looke sad.

Dutch. Beshrew my heart, but I pittie the man.

Pir. O wherefore Nature, didst thou *Lyons* frame ?

Since *Lyon* vilde hath heere deflour'd my deare ;

Which is, no, no, which was the fairest dame .

That liu'd, that lou'd, that lik't, that look't with cheere.

Come reares confound, out sword and wound

The pap of *Piramus* :

I, that left pap, where heart doth hop ;

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.

Now am I dead, now am I fled, my soule, is in the sky,

Tongue lose thy light, *Moone* take thy flight,

Now dye, dye, dye, dye, dye.

Dem. No Die, but an ace for him ; for he is but one.

Lys.

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A Midfommers nights Dreame.

289 *Lys.* Lesse then an ace man. For he is dead, he is nothing.

Duke. With the helpe of a Surgeon, he might yet reco-
uer and proue an asse.

Dutch. How chance Moone-shine is gone before?

293 *Thisby* comes backe, and findes her Louer.

Duke. She will finde him by star-light, Here she comes,
and her passion ends the play.

297 *Dut.* Me-thinkes she should not vse a long one for such
a *Piramus* : I hope she will be brieft.

Dem. A Moth will turne the ballance, which *Piramus*,
which *Thisbie* is the better : hee for a man, God warnd vs ;
she for a woman, God blesse vs.

301 *Lys.* She hath spied him already, with those sweete eies.

Dem. And thus she meanes, *videlicet*.

This. Asleepe my Loue ? What, dead my Doue ?

305 O *Piramus* arise,
Speake, speake. Quite dumbe ? Dead, dead ? A toombe
Must couer thy sweete eies.

These lilly lips, this cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheekes
309 Are gone, are gone ; Louers make mone :
His eyes were greene as Leekes. '

O sisters three, come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milke,
313 Lay them in gore, since you haue shone
With sheeres, his thred of silke.

Tongue not a word, come trusty sword,
Come blade, my breast imbrow :
317 And farwell friends, thus *Thisbie* ends ;
Adieu, adieu, adieu.

Duke. Moone-shine and Lyon are left to bury the dead.

Deme. I, and Wall too

321 *Lyon.* No, I assure you the wall is downe, that parted
their Fathers. Will it please you to see the Epilogue, or to
heare a Bergomask dance, betweene two of our company ?

A Midfommer nights Dreame.

Duke. No Epilogue, I pray you; for your play needs no excuse. Neuer excuse; for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if he that writ it, had plaid *Piramus*, and hang'd himselfe in *Thisbies* garter, it would haue beene a fine Tragedy: and so it is truely, and very notably discharg'd. But come, your Burgomaske; let your Epilogue alone.

The iron tongue of midnight hath tolde twelue.

Louers to bed, tis almost Fairy time.

I feare we shall out-sleepe the comming morne,

As much as we this night haue ouer-watcht.

This palpable grosse play hath well beguil'd

The heauy gate of night. Sweet friends to bed.

A fortnight hold we this solemnity,

In nightly Reuels, and new iollity.

Exeunt.

Enter Pucke.

Puck. Now the hungry Lyons rores,

And the Wolfe beholds the Moone;

Whilst the heauy ploughman snores,

All with weary taske fore-done.

Now the wasted brands do glow,

Whilst the scritch-owle, scritch'ing loud,

Puts the wretch that lies in woe,

In remembrance of a shrowd.

Now it is the time of night,

That the graues, all gaping wide,

Euery one lets forth his spright,

In the Churchway paths to glide.

And we Fairies, that do runne,

By the triple *Hecates* teame,

From the presence of the Sunne,

Following darknesse like a dreame,

Now are frolicke; not a Mouse

Shall disturbe this hallowed house.

I am sent with broome before,

To

A Midfommers nights Dreame.

To sweepe the dust behinde the doore.

Enter King and Queene of Fairies, with their traine.

Ob. Through the house giue glimmering light,
By the dead and drowisie fier,
Euery Elfe and Fairy spright,
Hop as light as bird from brier,
And this Ditty after me, Sing and dance it trippingly.

Tita. First rehearse this song by roate,
To each word a warbling note.
Hand in hand, with Fairy grace;
Will we sing and blesse this place.

Ob. Now vntill the breake of day,
Through this house, each Fairy stray.

To the best bride-bed will we,

Which by vs shall blessed be :

And the issue there create,

Euere shall be fortunate:

So shall all the couples three,

Euere true in louing be :

And the blots of Natures hand,

Shall not in their issue stand.

Neuer mole, hare-lip, nor scarre,

Nor marke prodigious, such as are

Despised in natiuity,

Shall vpon their children be.

With this field dew consecrate,

Euery Fairy take his gate,

And each feuerall chamber blesse,

Through this Palace, with sweete peace,

Euere shall in safery rest,

And the owner of it blest.

Trip away, make no stay;

Meete me all, by breake of day.

Exeunt.

Robin. If we shadowes haue offended,

Thinke but this (and all is mended)

That

A Midfommer nights Dream

That you haue but slumbred heere,
 While this visions did appeare.
 And this weake and idle theame,
 No more yeelding but a dreame,
 Gentles, do not reprehend.
 If you pardon, we will mend.
 And as I am an honest *Pucke*,
 If we haue vnearned lucke,
 Now to scape the Serpents tongue,
 We will make amends ere long;
 Else the *Pucke* a lyar call.
 So good night vnto you all.
 Giue me your hands, if we be friends,
 And *Robin* shall restore amends.

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FINIS.





